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OF

THE RISE AND PROGRESS

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CHRISTIANITY.

BY

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AUTHOR OF

"THE PROGRESS OF THE INTELLECT, AS EXEMPLIFIED IN THE RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT OF THE GREEKS AND HEBREWS."

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PREFACE.

THE treatment of Christian Theology has hitherto oscillated between church authority and individual impulse and feeling. Reason has throughout played only an incidental and secondary part. The early misapplication of it in the endeavour to determine, by way of speculative inference, the essential nature of the Deity, could end only in discomfiture. The Trinitarian controversy of the first centuries was a hopeless entanglement, in which the mind, driven from point to point by its own ingenuity, eventually registered the utterances of its torture and despair in the unintelligible jargon of the Athanasian Creed. Reawakening after a long interval, it returned once more to grapple with the "Creed" or established articles of dogma which had obtained undisputed possession of the Christian mind during the middle ages. But this new attempt turned out as unfortunately as the former one; and, so far from establishing a satisfactory alliance between faith and reason, produced their formal, and, it would seem, final separation. The only remaining alternative was that of an unmitigated dogmatism, or, if individual judgment were appealed to, an appeal strictly limited to Scripture and to feeling. A mystical coalition between the received dogma and the internal sentiments was still possible; if a man could not prove the truth of his position, he might at least feel himself to be in the right; the dogma might be arbitrarily limited to meet the feeling, or the feeling enlarged to comprehend the mysteries of the dogma. This was the ground taken by the early reformers, the medi

æval mystics, the school of Schleiermacher, and evangelical theology generally. The immediate aim of reform was not theoretical but practical; it contemplated not speculative change, but a better assurance of salvation. Evangelism, or, as it has been called, "pectoral theology," finds its infallible oracle in the spontaneous instincts of the soul; it denounces science as atheistic, and decries the unholy "propensions" of literary criticism. But a higher principle was tacitly implied in the Reformation. The rejection of church authority, the substitution of a scriptural criterium for an ecclesiastical one, and the arbitrary sifting and reconstruction of doctrine, presupposed the rights of cultivated judgment and progressive thought. The appeal to Scripture challenged inquiry in regard to its canonicity and interpretation; and, in particular, if the Reformation were to be a revival of primitive Christianity, it was before all things necessary to determine what primitive Christianity really was. The question is an historical one; and its importance must excuse the large, but still inadequate, space devoted to it in the following pages. It may be answered with more certainty now than at any former period, in consequence of the more searching investigations made since the time of Eichhorn into the Christian literature of the first two centuries; investigations which have been studiously withheld by those whose duty it is to inform the public mind, but who prefer to live upon its "child-like simplicity" or ignorance. The inquiry, it is true, should be rather with a view to comparison than imitation, since Protestantism gains little by copying an absolute precedent, and indeed cannot be retrogressive without abdicating its nature. Yet in reverting to the past it is impossible to help wondering how it is that Christianity should have dwindled down to the "drivelling, feeble, desultory thing" which it now appears to be;[1] a distorted burlesque of the original, exhibiting itself chiefly in Sabbatarian absurdities and a crazy infatuation about the prophecies. If Protestantism be really

[1] See the "Times" of October 26, 1854.

destitute of any distinct intellectual principle, if it be only a pretext for sectarian discord, or a name for the many anomalous professions of dissent from the dogmas and discipline of Rome, it were better at once to recognise the fact of its failure, and, for the sake of peace, to accept the despotic rule which is sure to be the last refuge of mental imbecility.

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PART I.

IDEA OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY.

PART I.

IDEA OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY.

1. *Christianity a Reform.*

If it be allowed that the principle best suited to human imperfection is that of reform, it seems a necessary inference that a principle so important ought not to be overlooked by religion; and undoubtedly the Christian religion was originally a reform of that narrow Judaical formalism which, wrapping the mind in its own devices, made it hypocritical or bigoted, and enslaved its powers of thought and action. But since Christianity strove rather to modify than to destroy the prevailing system, and could not at once eradicate the low tendencies of mankind, the old abuses, usurping the name of the religion which should have suppressed them, again crept in, continually calling forth fresh efforts for their reform. And when, from concurring moral and political circumstances, the Christendom of the sixteenth century was split into two camps, and a reformed faith became established through a large part of Europe, perfection was still unattained, and few will pretend, even now, that there is no room for further improvement.

Protestantism[1] is a good general name for religious reformation. It is the protest of reason and conscience against those superstitious abuses which have ever tended to substitute human precepts for the laws of God; and to confound pure Christianity with forms of worship and church government. To define Protestantism, then, is to define Christianity; it is to verify the possibility of effecting reform by restoration. This, of course, involves an appeal to history; in which, however, it

[1] It seems unfair to use the word Protestantism in the sense only of its shortcomings and defects; the application of it here made will be amply justified afterwards. Of course Lord Campbell's definition of the term in Abrassart *v.* Moysey, however good in law, is not conclusive in philosophy.

is especially requisite to guard against those influences of education and sentiment which always make it so difficult to disentangle the really historical from mere prejudice and prepossession.

The critical treatment of Church History begins with the Lutheran Reformation. It then became necessary for both parties to fortify historically the conclusions they had arrived at, conscientiously or logically; to trace back the opinions which they held to be those of the true Church to the earliest ages. Then it was that Lutherans, Romanists, Pietists, tried each of them to show that orthodoxy not merely was, but always had been, their own, and that heresy alone gave a precedent to their opponents. The argument began with the Reformers; since, finding Christianity already in existence, they were obliged to produce evidence to rebut the charge of arbitrary innovation. Catholic writers had been too closely involved in the action of their one church, to be able to look at it as a thing apart, and to survey its development impartially. Catholicism denounced all change as heresy; professing to be infallible and unchangeable, it treated novelties of its own adoption not as changes, but as developments of what impliedly was its own original meaning. Here, as in other cases, the first direction of thought was to the external or objective; for we discern the peculiarities and eccentricities of others before we perceive our own; and hence in early times there was no history of orthodoxy, but only the accounts given by Irenæus, Epiphanius, and Theodoret, of the various ramifications of heresy.[1]

Yet even now it may be difficult to form an impartial view of the exact nature of that faith which Jesus intended to introduce, and which reformers have striven to restore. Christianity, it is said, has regenerated the world; it is the life of morality and the basis of civilisation. Yet if it be asked what Christianity is, few will give the same answer. Every one means by it the religious ideal of his own mind. The question is answered either by arbitrary assumption, or by a random appeal to Scrip-

[1] The same is also true of the fathers of Ecclesiastical History, Hegesippus and Eusebius. To them the only history of the Church is the history of its conflict with external and internal foes. Orthodox dogma has no history; for history implies change, and Catholic truth must always be one and the same. Its only history is the enumeration of its successive teachers, the ascertainment of its authentic records, and its contests with its manifold adversaries. Heresy has no affinity with orthodoxy; the two are not connected, but contrasted.

ture texts. Some make it consist in faith, some in works; now purity of doctrine is the test; now uprightness of intention. Forgetting that the gospel itself recognises the doctrine of a resurrection to have been already prevalent in the days of Jesus, many consider its grand constituent to be the announcement of eternal life; or, unmindful of the widely-spread pantheisms of far more distant ages, attribute to it the first establishment of the idea which must, in some shape or other, form part of every religion, that of the union of the human and divine natures exemplified in the person of its Founder. Some consider Christianity to be an avoidance of the consequences of the Fall, a reconciling of God to the world through the sacrifice of his Son; while others, repudiating the notion that God can ever have hated or cursed his creatures, or allowed wrong to be an atonement for wrong, contend that it is rather the reconciling of man to himself and to his own conscience, enabling him to discard those subjective fancies which, confounding error and imperfection with depravity and sin, tended to crush all hope and energy under the conviction of an evil nature. The most advanced orthodox school in modern Germany endeavours to meet the difficulties of philosophical scepticism by practically abjuring reason, and resting religion exclusively on inward inspiration or feeling; while, from the days of the ancient Gnostics down to the present, speculators have tried to account for the most recondite Christian doctrines by metaphysical theories of their own invention. More candid and resolute inquirers have considered that such a proceeding makes Christianity the mere exponent of our own fancies; that we ought first to interrogate history, learning from facts how to distinguish the essence of religion from its mere appendages; and that only through such an exact examination as to what faith and reason respectively require can we be sure whether there exists any real hostility between them, or whether the circumstances are such as to call for a renunciation of either.

2. *Literature.*

But here a question occurs, which it is difficult to answer satisfactorily, or even at all, in a moderate space. Where are we to find the facts and the authentic records to guide our search for them? Jesus himself did not write. His oral teaching,

which inculcated a new spirit or feeling, but no new system of doctrine, was enforced only by his living example. His sole Scripture criterium was, "Moses and the Prophets." Writings could only have reached a few, and must, in his day, have been far less impressive than personal intercourse. The spirit of "the Word" would have evaporated in writing; and it is notorious that ancient Jewish prophecy degenerated from the time when it became customary to convey it in privately-elaborated compositions, until it at last disappeared among apocalyptic visions, priestly formularies, and Rabbinical pedantry. His immediate followers preached, but did not write; the literary efforts ascribed to them having little or no claim to be considered genuine. The second Epistle of Peter is confessedly spurious;[1] the first, though it has tradition in its favour, exhibits a subserviency to Pauline views, and also an imperfect comprehension of them, which can scarcely be attributed to the great "pillar"[2] of Jew Christianity. The Epistle of James is marked as supposititious by Eusebius[3] and Jerome; and its presumed author is neither the son of Zebedee, nor, in all probability, the son of Alpheus, but James the Just, the "brother of the Lord" alluded to in the Galatians, who was not one of the twelve. Jude himself admits that he was not of the number of the early Apostles;[4] and the Apostolic origin of the first Epistle of John must be given up, unless the fourth gospel, to which it stands in evident relation, be John's also. But this has been shown by recent criticism to be more than doubtful. The fourth gospel is intelligible only when studied as a theoretic view of Christianity founded on the Pauline and Alexandrian theologies, differing widely in plan as well as in purport from the other gospels, which, indeed, it often contradicts. It is difficult to imagine that an eye-witness of the events should have suffered them to be made so entirely subservient to a speculative idea; or that he whom we read of in Galatians as an exclusive "Apostle of the Circumcision," and who at a later period wore the insignia of Jewish priesthood,[5] not only became a convert to views he had before opposed, but carried them to an extreme not contemplated even by St. Paul himself. His reputed authorship of the Apo-

[1] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iii. 3. [2] Gal. ii. 9.

[3] Hist. Eccl. ii. 23.—He says, "It should be understood that this Epistle is spurious—not many of the ancients say anything about it."

[4] Ver. 17, 18.

[5] "Ἱερευς το πεταλον πεφορηκως."—Euseb. Hist. Eccl. v. 24.

calypse ill accords with his having written a book so utterly dissimilar in spirit, so alien in its tone from that doctrine of a material millennium of which, according to the Ephesian presbyters, the Apostle John was the great propounder.[1] These difficulties, the absence of unequivocal citation by the fathers or apologists earlier than Irenæus,[2] and several geographical and historical incongruities, especially the variance from that practice of the Eastern Church as to keeping the Jewish passover which John is said to have sanctioned, have induced a conviction[3] that the book comes to us, not from the Apostle, but a much later writer. St. Mark's gospel is generally allowed to be a derivative one; Luke himself admits that he was far from being one of the earliest compilers of a gospel narrative, and, moreover, frequently borrows from Matthew;[4] so that we turn to Matthew as possessing comparatively the best credentials. But even Matthew's accuracy is far from being undisputed, nor is his account free from interpolation. He is said to have written the "Logia," or "Sayings of the Lord," in Hebrew. But we have no means of tracing the connection between these Hebrew memorials of the "Logia" and our Greek canonical Matthew. Many of his "necessary" inferences from imaginary predictions too much resemble the forced applications of Scripture in Rabbinical tradition to warrant any confidence in the accounts they apply to; and it is remarkable that the earliest gospel citations, though generally agreeing with each other, do not tally with Matthew, but with a Petrinic gospel called the "Gospel of the Hebrews." It would seem that the earliest historical Christian literature consisted of records of the Lord's sayings or discourses (συγγραμματα λογιων); that these were translated and variously enlarged into narratives, including time, place, and circumstance, until, out of many varying forms comprehended under the general term of a "Gospel of the Hebrews," one was selected, and, with several concessions to Pauline theology, reconstructed into our present Matthew. The agreement, as well as the inconsistencies, of the three first gospels, considered as varying compilations from one tradition,

[1] Irene. Hær. Stieren's Ed. i. 809.

[2] Comp. Zeller's Theol. Magazine, vol. vi. 144, sq. and vol. xii. 145, sq. Schwegler's Montanism, p. 184, and Zeitalter, i. 218.

[3] See Baur's Untersuchungen, p. 327. Schwegler's Nachapostolische Zeitalter, vol. ii., and the Tubingen Theol. Jahrbücher, for 1844, 45, and 47.

[4] Baur. ib. p. 512.

or one set of generally-corresponding memoranda, may be thus accounted for; and it would appear from the greater Evangelical agreement in regard to the doctrines and discourses that these, though often interpolated with views of later development, were, on the whole, preserved with far greater accuracy than the story of the life. The latter has been shown in the yet unrefuted work of Strauss to be largely mingled with Mythus (that is, with the conceptions and ideal imagery of the Jewish theological mind), and cannot be relied upon as an exact biography or History. Even considered as a mere record of doctrine, the gospels should be used with caution, and our proneness to believe them literally should be moderated and schooled by greater attention to information supplied by contemporary circumstances and writers. Of illustrative writers, the earliest, and incomparably the most important, is St. Paul, the authenticity of whose four principal Epistles, Romans, the two Corinthians, and the Galatians, has (unless in minor details) never been questioned. It was, indeed, from the more educated Hellenists, *i. e.* those converts from Judaism who were acquainted with the language and writers of Greece, that proceeded the earliest Christian literature, as well as greater liberality in Christian ideas. But we often find in the gospels an anticipation of those liberal views in defence of which St. Paul had to undergo through his whole life a protracted struggle against Judaical exclusiveness, abetted, as his own remarks seem to imply, by the older Apostles.[1] Even Matthew, who inculcates that eternal obligation of Jewish law which St. Paul disclaimed,[2] and would limit Christianity to the "house of Israel,"[3] in other passages attributes to its author the very doctrines which his followers refused to entertain, and for whose sake St. Paul was persecuted, *i. e.* its character of novelty, independence, and universalism,[4] the admission of the Gentiles,[5] and exclusion of the Jews. The Christian scheme considered as a gradual invisible development, comparable to the expansion of the seed into the tree,[6] or to the secret process of fermentation in meal,[7] will be recognised by any one familiar with the ideas and phraseology of the times to be the very contrary of that outward consummation which was to be effected visibly and speedily

[1] Gal. ii.; 2 Cor. xi. 22.
[2] Matt. v. 18–23.
[3] Matt. i. 21; x. 5, 6; xv. 24; xix. 28.
[4] ix. 16, 17.
[5] xxiv. 14; xxviii. 19.
[6] xiii. 31.
[7] Ib.

by the second coming of the Messiah in glory;[1] and the story of the immaculate conception evidently implies a christological theory quite opposed to the genealogy and baptism. Again those traces of a more lofty and liberal Christianity, which seem like interpolations amidst the general Hebraic tendencies of Matthew, re-appear more naturally and consistently, yet with considerable Judaical qualifications, in the more finished artificial composition of the Paulinist Luke. Here we find the genealogy, not so much of the heir of David and of Abraham, as of the second Adam, the Son of God. Here, too, the Prophet, rejected in his own country, prophetically refers in the very outset of his career to the acceptance of the Gentiles, prefigured by the Syrian Naaman and widow of Sarepta;[2] the proverbial reversal of worldly prosperity[3] is made a type of the exchange of spiritual relations between Heathen and Jew;[4] the late repentance of the prodigal son (the Gentiles) is contrasted with the hypocritical professions of the elder (*i. e.* the Jews); the Samaritan exhibits a charity unknown to the Levite and the priest; the kingdom of heaven is open to all men[5] without any wrong or depredation; and as the Twelve were sent to convert the twelve tribes whom hereafter they were to judge,[6] so seventy other teachers, corresponding to the received number of the nations,[7] and eating indifferently the clean and the unclean, are appointed to superintend the impending conversion of the whole world. The sentiment here expressed is the very same as that for which St. Paul so long laboured with scanty success; and if these liberal views of Christianity were so tardily comprehended by its teachers, they must, of course, have required a still longer interval before they could give the dominant tone to its literature.

It were useless here to enter on a discussion which would more than fill a volume; yet the reader ought to have an idea of the sort of evidence on which the authenticity of the canon rests; and of the character of the several writings. The imposing array of testimonies quoted on their behalf by Lardner and others from the fathers, loses its effect when other passages show that the said fathers, being immoderately credulous and undiscriminating, forfeit almost all claim to literary author-

[1] Matt. x. 23; xvi. 28. [2] Luke iv. 26. [3] Matt. xix. 30.
[4] Luke xiii. 29, 30. [5] Luke xvi. 16, comp. Matt. xi. 12.
[6] But comp. Luke ix. 6. [7] Ch. x. 1.

ity. Orthodox apologists state one side of the case only; the witness undergoes no cross-examination at their hands, and the effect on the reader's mind is, of course, one-sided also. An impartial writer would allow it to be known that the reasoning of Irenæus in favour of the four gospels is geographical or meteorological, derived from the fact of there being four winds and four quarters of the globe. He would show that Tertullian, while vouching for the authenticity of John's gospel, recounts, with equal seriousness, the impassability of John's body in a vessel of flaming oil, and the consequent physical necessity for a commutation of his punishment. He would advert to the fact that the silence of the fathers is often as significant as their notice; and that if their attestations are to be considered authoritative in one set of cases, they must be equally respected in others, where they are brought forward to support the most palpable fictions, and the most questionable books. Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen quote nearly all our present canon. But they do more than this; they quote with equal respect books long since abandoned by the Church,—the Gospel of the Hebrews, the Shepherd of Hermas, the Clementine Epistles, and Peter's Kerugma. In their estimate the Apocalypse of Peter claims equal rank with that of John; and the book of Enoch and the Ascensio Mosis defy the ban of the Church, being sanctioned as inspired authority by inspiration itself.[1]

The fathers had few resources for sifting literary evidence; they used the only evidences of authenticity they had, but such as it would be ridiculous now to rely on. Their criterium was, in *fact, no more* than a general instinctive feeling of what was right and true; they gave out as authentic those writings which they, or the Church, wished to be so; and it might be shown in each case, that the method of selection was entirely arbitrary, measuring the canonical authority according to the doctrine, not the doctrine by the canonical authority. Tertullian, in his treatise on prayer,[2] assumes the Scriptural dignity of the book called the "Shepherd," which Irenæus[3] also places on the same footing; yet, in another place[4] where the text is against him, he treats the same work as "impure, apocryphal, and scouted by all the churches." And yet, simulta-

[1] In Jude.
[2] "Imo contra scripturam fecerit," &c. De Orat. 12.
[3] Irenæ. Hær. iv. 20, 2; comp. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. v. 8.
[4] De Pudicit. 10.

neously with this unqualified reprobation, seemingly implying the severe and watchful guardianship of an orthodox literature, the book in question was respectfully appealed to by Clement of Alexandria, as it was also by Origen and Athanasius. Many books, which were perfectly orthodox when composed, fell into disrepute, while others, which were unacknowledged on their first appearance, were unexpectedly promoted in their place. This capricious formation of the canon is curiously illustrated in the opposite fortunes of the Second Epistle of Peter and the Apocalypse. The latter, the best-authenticated of all the New Testament books, lost in church estimation in proportion to the estrangement of orthodoxy from its doctrines, which were those adhered to by the Millenarians and Montanists. The Second Epistle of Peter fared differently. Unknown during the first two centuries, it is mentioned for the first time as of dubious authority by Origen; Eusebius describes it as uncanonical,[1] but as having been very generally received on account of its practical usefulness. Its claims grow with time, until the Council of Laodicea quietly places the once-repudiated composition by the side of the first Petrine Epistle; the scepticism of Jerome is hushed, and the classification, avowedly based on expediency, is ratified by general assent.

Perhaps it may be said, that we have no right to assume so wholesale a scheme of literary imposture as the above remarks imply. But a reference to the heading of the collections in Fabricius, where we find fragments of *no* less than fifty Apocryphal Gospels, six-and-thirty Apocryphal Acts, and twelve spurious Apocalypses, is sufficient to convince us that the editing of books under fictitious names was no exceptional case, but the habitual practice of the time.[2] If a writer wished to gain acceptance for a particular line of argument, there was no more ready expedient than to borrow the name of some popular authority, whose voice, thus evoked, as it were, from the grave, seemed the more sacred and authoritative, although often made to assume a tone the reverse of that which it would in all probability have adopted when living

[1] Hist. Eccl. iii. 3; vi. 25.

[2] In Euseb. Hist. Eccl. vi. 20. Caius reproaches the Montanists with their unscrupulous impudence in literary forgery, yet many spurious books, as the "Acts of Paul and Thecla" (Tert. de Capt. 17), and the Epistle to the Laodiceans, continued to be used by the Church after their real character had been detected.

as when Peter vouches for the wisdom of Paul, while Paul pleads for High-Church principles. Irenæus and Epiphanius speak of myriads of forgeries (πεπλασμενα γραφεια) of this kind; and, indeed, pseudonymous writing had been in all ages fashionable among the Jews, who were in the habit of throwing back the advanced views of recent times by way of prophecy or otherwise to an earlier age, and making each spurious document eagerly assert its own genuineness.[1] In the Old Testament, all Psalms go to the account of David, prophecies usually take the name of Isaiah, and Solomon is the general fountain of gnomic wisdom. The name of Daniel is raked up to herald the destruction of Antiochus Epiphanes, and even Abraham and Enoch appear upon the list of authors. The pretended correspondence of Christ with Abgarus, and of Paul with Seneca, the Gospels of the Infancy, the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, a number of false Pauline Epistles, and many other instances, exemplify the excess to which, in the post-apostolic age, this practice was carried.

The idea of a New Testament Canon was slowly developed. No trace of such a thing is to be found until late in the second century. Circumstances then arose which made it clearly needful to have a written standard to appeal to. In the earliest Christian age the only record was tradition; and the Gnostics had learned from their own practical experience[2] of the facility of imposture how to put a right estimate on the pretended Apostolical authority of the writings which orthodoxy began to quote against them.[3] The oral long continued to be esteemed above the Scriptural, and Papias, the oldest of Patristic authorities, values the "living voice" far more than the dead letter:[4] The scanty-written memorials of his day were hesitatingly used, and strictly confined to persons of approved discretion.[5] Hints are thrown out that Mark's gospel was originally a surreptitious publication of the discourses of Peter,[6] whose avowed prejudices against writing give way[7] only when, after his death, the concession becomes inevitable. The early Christian Apologists argue almost exclusively from the Old Testament; and Justin, when referring to his "Apostolic Memorials," usually considers

[1] See Köstlin, Die Pseudonyme Litteratur der ältesten Kirche, Tub. Theol. Magazine for 1851, vol. x.
[2] Epiphan. Hær. xxvi. 12.
[3] Irenæ, Hær. iii. 2, 1.
[4] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iii. 39, p. 382, Hein.
[5] Clem. Hom. Ep. Pet. 1.
[6] Comp. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. vi. 14, with Dem. Esan. iii. 5.
[7] 2 Peter i. 15.

it proper to fortify their authority by Old Testament citation. The Epistle of Barnabas recognises no inspired written standard of Christianity; its author, like St. Paul, claims an immediate transfusion from the divine fountain of the spirit, asserting the same privilege for every true Christian. Athenagoras and Melito, who strenuously uphold the inspiration of the Old Testament, know nothing of the New; and the uncertain condition of the contemporary Christian literature is illustrated in a rescript of Serapion to a Cilician congregation, in which the Bishop on maturer deliberation withdraws the assent he had before given to the use of the "Gospel of Peter." The first symptoms of attributing to certain writings of imputed Apostolic origin the inspired character already allowed to the Old Testament are found towards the end of the second century in the second Petrine Epistle,[1] and in Theophilus and Irenæus; yet Irenæus considers the conservation and propagation of the faith to be secure independently of any written documents. Eusebius is the first who appears to have seriously addressed himself to the construction of a Canon; but his opinions are given so hesitatingly, and the usage to which he appeals is so fortuitous and fluctuating, that his attempt rather proves the rule of faith to have been still unformed, and that there existed no means except the fantasy of the churches for forming it. His vague notices respecting the "many," or the "few," or the "majority," who approved of this book, or were unfavourable to that, and in many instances the inconsistency of his statements with what is known from other sources,[2] leave us to infer that the present Canon is no result of critical research, but a deposit of capricious usage, and that the "standard" was formed, as in other instances of a "standard literature," by mere arbitrary preference or acquiescence. But we obviously desert the path of impartial inquiry when, accepting as final the decisions of the second or third century, we confound the orthodoxy of so late an age with the opinions of primitive Christianity, and resolve that no books, except such as were considered unexceptionable then, can possess historical value now. We have no right to single out the most meritorious productions of the age, four, for example, out of many hundreds of gospels, and while paying unlimited reverence to

[1] 2 Peter iii. 16.

[2] He says, for instance, that the Kerugma, which is often cited under the formula "Πετρος λεγει," by Clement of Alexandria, and which is allowed to be genuine by Origen, had been quoted by no church writer, ancient or modern.

these as the sole inspired repositories of Christian verity, to anathematise the rest as heretical. All have a value when considered as indices of the mental life of the period of their origin. It was natural that the first attempts at rationalistic criticism should be negative and sceptical. De Wette came to the conclusion that, except the genuine Epistles of Paul, all the New Testament writings are more or less suspicious; and Strauss unanswerably proved the matter of the gospels to be unhistorical; that the events recorded either happened not at all, or, at least, not in the way supposed. But we want a positive result. It is not enough to show that the authorship of a book is doubtful, or its contents fabulous; we have to ascertain its true character as a literary document; and if among contemporary writings many appear to be fictitious, we have still to inquire how the fiction arose, and by comparison with circumstances to deduce its historical import. The writing, proved to be deceptive in its common acceptation, may, when restored to its true place, resume its importance, and become a correct index of party disputes and doctrinal peculiarities. Commencing thus where the negative critics left off, F. C. Baur leads a new school of positive criticism, the aim of which is to restore, by laborious research, the literary history of the two first centuries, and from a commanding survey of all their memorials, to place each book in its true light in reference to the ideas connected with its origin.

3. *Jesus the "Christ."*

Jesus appealed to a sentiment common to all men and all forms of religion, the desire for "salvation," *i. e.* union and reconcilement with God. To those who accepted his claim to be the rightful Messiah he offered assurance of compensation, in the ideal wealth of a heavenly hereafter, for all the short-comings and discomforts of the world. The offer was accompanied with only one external condition, expressed in the single word "righteouness" (δικαιοσυνη), *i. e.* observance of the commandments. But then it was to be a sincere, not a hypocritical righteousness; a theocracy of the heart, proposing divine perfection as the pattern and climax of human effort. The prevailing Pharisaic Judaism was little more than hypocritical formalism or puerile scholasticism, and was indebted for its con-

tinuance not so much to a healthy correspondence with the religious instincts, as to the prospect it seemed to hold out of political liberation to the nation professing it. Through a long series of misfortunes the Jews had been constantly supported by the expectation of a great deliverer, called, emphatically, the "anointed" king, or Messiah,[1] who would restore the ancient glory of their theocracy or "Divine Kingdom" as it existed under David and Solomon, inaugurating at the same time a new reign of righteousness. How far, or in what sense, these hopes were countenanced by Jesus, it is not easy to say. He lived when the Jewish mind was at the height of politico-religious excitement, and when it was almost impossible for a reformer to avoid being more or less connected with the prevailing Messianic expectation. Yet he seems to have commenced his public life in the character of an ordinary prophet, following in the steps of John the Baptist, and like him teaching that moral preparation or "repentance" which had been announced as the indispensable preliminary of Messiah's advent. It was probably by degrees only that his mission assumed the higher character, when long reflection had convinced him of its propriety; at all events the project, if really entertained from the first, could not, consistently with the narrative, have been openly announced and recognised, since at a late period we find the faith of Peter[2] ascribed to immediate revelation, and distinguished as the only exception to the prevailing opinion that he was Elias, or one of the prophets. The new idea which had so suddenly flashed on the mind of Peter is said to have been immediately and carefully suppressed, as if from a conviction of the hopelessness and danger, even then, of assuming a title whose full import as commonly understood it was impossible for Jesus to realise. That part of the Messianic character which alone, for the moment, he ventured to profess,[3] was that best suited to his humble fortunes; he addressed himself to the poor and meek in spirit, to those who hungered and thirsted, not for conquest, but for righteousness. It is in all probability to later compilers of the traditions about him, and to their

[1] "Christ," or "the Anointed," is a general title of the Jewish magistrates and kings, afterwards used in a specific sense to denote the great *expected* king. "Ut apud Persas Arsaces, apud Romanos Cæsar, apud Ægyptios Pharao, ita apud Judæos Christus communi nomine rex appellatur."—Ps. Clem. Recognitiones, i. 45, p. 497.

[2] Matt. xvi. 14, 17.

[3] Luke iv. 18.

wish to incorporate with his history all the Messianic titles and imagery found in the Prophets, that we owe the story of the supernatural conception, as well as the inconsistent genealogies laboriously deduced from David, the Star of Bethlehem, and other points of glorification and coincidence. Jesus appears to have been considered by his contemporaries, and by his own mother, to be the undoubted son of Joseph the carpenter;[1] and, indeed, if Joseph really had nothing to do with the parentage of his reputed son, how are we to explain the genealogies, which take so much pains to describe Joseph's ancestry, and Joseph's only? How could the expectation of Christ's being a son of David be answered by such a mock-fulfilment, or rather excuse for non-fulfilment, inserted, as if expressly for the purpose of its own confutation, in those gospels, and only those, in which the genealogies are present to contradict it? But, then, if Jesus was really the son of him, who, with his mother, is said to have "sought him sorrowing," it is clear that the inconsistent supernatural story must belong to a distinct and later circle of ideas, and that it must have been purposely transferred from some foreign source to its present incongruous place, when the definitive assumption of Messianic dignity made it desirable to meet the low conceptions of sensual persons, by expressing the attribute of divine sonship in a coarse physical sense. The so-called Immanuel prophecy, for the purpose of whose fulfilment we are told that the supernatural conception was contrived and executed,[2] has long been allowed by the best critics to have no possible connection with the birth of Jesus. Ahaz could have derived no consolation, or "sign" of deliverance, from an event which was to happen many hundred years after he was dead; the word Almah does not necessarily mean "Virgin," as may be seen by reference to Gesenius, Knobel, or any respectable commentator; and Matthew's gospel, though generally of the early Jew-Christian stamp, is by no means exclusively so, and surely cannot be regarded as containing the *ipsissima verba* of Matthew the publican.

Jesus certainly assumed a character coinciding, in popular acceptation, with that of a political innovator; but there is no conclusive reason for thinking that his immediate views embraced more than the spiritual unworldly kingdom which he

[1] Matt. xiii. 55; Luke ii. 48; comp. John i. 45. [2] Matt. i. 22.

really founded, and to which he is related to have limited them. He fulfilled the office forced upon him by circumstances in an enlarged sense, converting it from a national peculiarity into the general heritage of mankind. The very existence of the Messiah theory was an acknowledgment that the old theocratic system, with its accurate adjustment of temporal rewards and compensations, had failed. It was, in fact, the theocracy postponed; the adjournment to an ideal future of what could not be expected from the present. It was the public or political expression of an inference which the Hebrew moralists had long before drawn in regard to the fortunes of individuals, when to the difficult, and to Hebrews, especially paradoxical problem—"Wherefore do the wicked flourish?"[1] they could only reply as Solon did, by asserting a firm belief in ultimate compensation.[2] The frequency and notoriety of the association of prosperity with crime even affected language, and made it customary to speak of the rich and wicked as synonymous.[3] Early Christianity was, in a peculiar sense, the living historical realisation of this hope of final retribution. It was an abnegation of the present, a life in expectancy. It addressed itself especially to the poor,[4] or rather to those willing votaries of poverty,[5] who withdrew themselves from the humiliations and disappointments of the outer world to the inner one of their own consciences and convictions. Ostensibly blending the future indemnification of the individual with the great national expectation, it assumed an entire contrast and separation between the present and the time to come (the "αιων μελλων"), willingly accepting privation now, in assurance of obtaining the true riches, peace, joy, and glory hereafter. It said, "Blessed are the seeming poor, but really and spiritually rich; blessed are they who hunger now, for they shall be filled; blessed they who weep now, for they shall laugh." It exhorted men to lay up treasure in heaven; to take no thought for the morrow, to seek righteousness first, trusting that all other goods would be added. In short, the Christian's palladium is faith; it is an appeal from outer things to spiritual things; the practical assertion of a paradox which, expressed with equal

[1] Job xxi. 7; xii. 6; Psalm lxxiii. 3; xciv. 3.
[2] Psalm xxxvii. 38; lviii. 11; lxxiii. 17, &c.
[3] Prov. xviii. 23; Psalm xvii. 14; Isaiah liii. 9.
[4] Luke iv. 18; vi. 20, 26; x. 13, 21.
[5] See Baur's Canon. Evangel. pp. 446–450 on the phrase πτωχοι τω πνευματι.

emphasis in both the Pauline[1] and the Judaical writings of the New Testament, constituted the central essence of early Christian feeling.

4. *Christian Antecedents.*

This feeling cannot be said to have been new, although in Christianity it assumed an unwonted form, and entered upon a new phase of development as a religion. Never, probably, was a religion propagated by mere argument; it requires a "demonstration of the spirit" addressed to some unappropriated blank in the convert's mind which instinctively accepts the faith adapted to its want. At the time of the first appearance of Christianity, there notoriously existed, not only in Palestine, but throughout the Roman world, an unsatisfied religious craving for something superior to the effete symbolism of antiquity. The conquests of Rome and the conquests of philosophy, by promoting a more enlarged acquaintance with the world and with the forms of thought, had each in a different way contributed to subvert the picturesque conceptions inherited from nature worship, and the decay of superstition already indicated an aptitude for something better; but while the educated found indemnification in the Epicurean or Stoic schools, in a stern independence of the conscience or the free pursuit of pleasure or of knowledge, there was no consolation for the vulgar except in the exchange of one gross superstition for another, or in what they could derive from the resources of their own souls. There is certainly much in the rise and progress of Christianity calculated, at first sight, to defy the effort to explain them. That a conception emanating from a few obscure men in an obscure corner should spread, in spite of opposition, over the whole civilised world, until overturning all other religious establishments it victoriously installed itself in their place, seems to be one of those "stupendous" events which can only be accounted for by a direct interposition of

[1] Comp. 2 Cor. vi. 10, and the parable of the rich man. The writer of the Epistle to Diognetus seems to have had the passage from Corinthians in view, when he says of the Christians (Justini Op., Coloniæ, 1686, p. 497), "Though in the flesh, they live not according to the flesh; they love all men, yet all men persecute them; they are killed, and yet they live; although paupers themselves, they yet make many rich; and while standing on earth, are citizens of heaven," &c.

the Deity. And yet, perhaps, few will deny that the most ordinary phenomena of nature are often as inexplicable, and always as really divine, as the most gigantic revolutions of history; and that the disposition to account for the latter in a different way from what are now generally admitted to be natural processes, is chiefly owing to its being more difficult to investigate their causes, and to the impressive influence they have on that account over our imaginations. To ascribe the diffusion of Christianity to supernatural interference is not only to admit our ignorance of the means of its establishment; but to assert the utter impossibility of ever understanding them. Were this supposition true, no history of it could be consistently attempted. But it is clear that there are many things connected with its origin which may be accounted for; and even the fact that history is confessedly a proper subject of study is in itself an admission that Providence acts through generally ascertainable means, and that its ways, though not obvious, are not wholly inscrutable.

The religion of Greece, of which the Roman was a branch, may be said to have been doomed from the time when there arose collaterally with it a philosophy; since we may be sure, that so soon as religion and philosophy became distinct departments, the mental activity of the age is in advance of its faith, and that though habit may sustain the latter for a time, its vitality is gone. The Christian movement was, in many respects, analogous to the philosophic movement begun with Socrates. The privileges tendered by one were calculated to appease wants and aspirations already distinctly felt and expressed by the other. The one effected practically what the other sought theoretically. The initial Christian requirement, repentance (*μετανοια*), the establishment of a condition of mind and feeling "fit for the kingdom of heaven," was the necessary practical result of the self-examination and self-knowledge insisted on by Socrates, and of the ethical direction given by him to the earliest systematic inquiry after truth. Ideal righteousness, the search for divine perfection, the endeavour to be "as good and wise as possible,"[1] these were the true and only means of "escape" ("*αποφυγη κακων*") or salvation contemplated both by Socrates and Jesus. To the truths already uttered in the Athenian prison, Christianity added little or

[1] Phædo, cxxx. p. 107; Matt. v. 48.

nothing, except a few symbols, which, though perhaps well calculated for popular acceptance, are more likely to perplex than to instruct, and offer the best opportunity for priestly mystification. The moral independence and self-centred freedom asserted by the Stoics and Epicureans, were triumphantly exemplified by the Christian ascetics and martyrs, and religion varied from the phraseology of philosophy more than from its objects. For, however unlike the Stoical pride may seem to Christian meekness, it is evident that the same feeling which is meekness and resignation towards God, is constancy and courage in relation to the world; and that in both philosophy and faith the same consciousness of superiority to the world implies a corresponding attitude of resignation to the Power which alone rules, and can really overcome the world. The scepticism and idealism which ensued in Greece, though leading astray from objective idealism, tended to bring all that remained of philosophy into closer approximation to religion, by more strictly confining the appeal to subjective consciousness; so that Christianity, instead of nullifying the condition to which the mind had been brought by preceding systems, was little more than a succinct and popular expression of it; in short, it was the acceptance under the form of religion of what in philosophy had been found to be insufficient. It had this, in common with those systems—that it was a reaction from effete outward forms to the fresh convictions of the conscience; an endeavour to make up for external calamity and disappointment by the independent resources of the soul. The deep want underlying all philosophic systems was that union with God which is the universal aspiration of religion. So far as effort, heroic or intellectual, could ideally effect this union, philosophy had already attained it. But philosophy belongs to few; the common mind, when sufficiently awakened to become conscious of disparity and disunion, pines under the impression of a corrupt and "fallen" nature, and escapes from the haunting self-conviction only when, accepting as a faith what reason repudiates, it anticipates the conclusion, and grasps the absolute unity of the human and divine as a given indubitable fact. This idea was attained, at first as a feeling, afterwards as a definite creed or dogma, by Christianity. Based on the Oriental idea of inspiration, it aimed at perfect conformity with the Divine will, and at length elevated the divinely-gifted man by whom the aspiration had been realised

into a God, by confounding his person with his doctrine. It effaced other religions not so much by contradicting them, as by concentrating their results, and reiterating in a generally-comprehensible formula all that they possessed which was really useful. And if Christianity so much resembles its antecedents, containing positively nothing which may not be satisfactorily accounted for as a spontaneous development of thought or natural requirement of the mind and heart, why unfairly divorce it from historical analogies; why need we be astonished, or allow our astonishment to represent as marvellous or miraculous a modification rendered inevitable, and which indeed was already pre-established in the mind before Christianity supplied a symbol for expressing it?

5. *Jesus the Preacher of "Righteousness."*

The specific form which this modification assumed was determined by specific Jewish antecedents. The Messianic theory of the Jews was their old theocracy idealised; and the same theory, still more purified and spiritualised, ripened into Christianity. The latter was the only form in which any realisation of the Messiah scheme was at the time desirable or possible. Jesus engrafted his religion on the long disappointed hopes of his countrymen at a crisis when, as commonly interpreted, they were threatened with extinction. He disposed of inapplicable Messianic imagery, partly by figurative construction,[1] partly (in accordance with the general character of his doctrine) by adjournment to a mysterious future; concentrating his present efforts on the moral reform which prophecy had declared was to precede political amelioration, and which he made to consist not in the introduction of a new system, but in a renewal of the earnestness and vitality of Judaism. Judaism, under Rabbinical management, had become a system of false-hearted hypocrisy and narrow quibbling. A pedantic study of Scripture had been substituted for the spirit which inspired it; and inferences obtained by subtle investigation of the latter were handed down as of equal authority with the text,

[1] As in the parable comparing "the Kingdom" to a feast, which, in Jewish typology, was the banqueting on Leviathan. See Job xli. 6; 2 Esdras vi. 52; Enoch lviii. 7; Gfrörer's Jahrhundert des Heils, ii. 34, 248.

under the name of "Traditions of the Elders." "The Jewish law," says Lessing,[1] "was like a school primer, whose use, if too long persevered in, injures instead of promoting the growth of intellect; since, in order to adapt it to mature age, you are obliged to force into it more than it naturally holds, and to strain ingenuity to obtain out of it indications foreign to its purpose." In this way Rabbinism had absurdly travestied the rational use of Scripture; and the dictates of universal morality, or "weightier matters of the law," were postponed to technical ordinances nullifying or overruling them. Jesus declared that he did not come to destroy the law, but, like the prophets, to enforce and to fulfil it. He repeated the Rabbinical dictum, that "until heaven and earth should pass away,"[2] no one iota of the law should fail. Like Socrates, he attended in every particular, not only to the essentials, but even the forms, of the religion of his country. But he discountenanced the perversity which made the form supplant the spirit; which made giving of tithes or Sabbath observance of more importance than benevolence and justice. He did not renounce sacrifice, but he showed how much more important were the practice of virtue, the proper training of the feelings, and the two great rules, love to God and to one's neighbour, under which he summed up the whole meaning of law and prophets. He did not repudiate Sabbath observance, though he discouraged superstitious abuse of it, making it, as doubtless it was originally intended to be, subservient to human convenience. By enlarging the application of the law beyond the narrow Pharisee reading, and regulating the relative importance of its precepts, he seemed not merely to have revivified it, but almost to have created it afresh. Yet his aim was rather to restore than to invent; to place the formal in due subordination to the essential.

It has often been observed that the Gospel morality is no absolute novelty,[3] but that the same precepts had been already announced, though not, indeed, in so condensed and accessible a form, both among the Jews and other nations. The requital of good for evil, the virtue of loving an enemy instead of ill-treat-

[1] Erziehung des Menschengeschlechtes.

[2] That is, during the existing age of the world.

[3] Lactantius (Inst. vii. 7) admits that all the moral truths and mysteries of religion had already been taught by Pagan philosophy.

ing him,[1] had been appreciated by the philanthropy of the Greeks and the Hindoos;[2] Horace's "nil conscire sibi" is the apostolic eulogium of a good conscience;[3] the maxims "guard the thoughts of the heart," and "do to others as you wish them to do to you," are among the maxims of Confucius.[4] The same doctrines had long ago been announced in the law, and were equally prized by contemporary Jewish theology. It is said in many parts of the written record of that theology, the Talmud, that the Levitical command, "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,"[5] is the first of moral rules. A Pagan having asked Rabbi Hillel to explain the Jewish law in few words, was answered, "that which you would not that another should do to you, that do not you to him; this is the sum of the law; the rest is a mere commentary on it." The other great command, "to love God with all the heart and soul," was notoriously the property of the Jew before it passed into Christianity;[6] "thrice blessed is he," said the Talmud, "who does good through love to God, over and above him who serves through fear."[7] Jesus did not announce his moral maxims as his own, but as the essence of what was already to be found in the Scriptures;[8] he taught, like a true prophet, "with authority;" still it was only what he had read or "heard of the will of his Father." The great rule of imitating the divine example was inherited from Judaism, as explained by the Rabbis, under the expressions, "walking in the ways of the Lord," "working God's works," or imitating God's attributes. The ways of God are pointed out, it was said, in Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7, where the divine attributes are enumerated, mercy, grace, goodness, truth.[9] "Be ye holy," says the Jerusalem Targum,[10] "as the angels who serve before the Lord your God." Charity includes all other commandments;[11] "it is better," says the book of Tobit,[12] to give charity than to heap up riches, for "charity preserves from death and cleanses from all sin."

The better-informed Jews knew well that mere forms had no intrinsic value;[13] and the old prophets, though occasionally em-

[1] Plato, Crito, p. 49; de Rep. i. 335, 534.
[2] Comp. Wettstein, note to Matt. v. 45, and Wilson's Oxford Lecture, p. 60.
[3] 1 John iii. 21.
[4] Davis's China, ii. pp. 41, 50.
[5] Levit. xix. 18, 34.
[6] Deut. vi. 5, and xi. 13.
[7] See Gfrörer's Jahrhundert des Heils, p. 135; comp. Mark xii. 33.
[8] Matt. vii. 12–22, 40; Luke x. 26; comp. John iii. 10.
[9] Book Siphri to Deut. xi. 22.
[10] To Numb. xv. 40.
[11] See Tosaphta Peah in Gfrörer, supr. p. 138.
[12] Ch. xii. 8, 9.
[13] Mark xii. 33.

ploying symbolism in order vividly to express a meaning, treated obsolete symbolism with little respect, considering forms, apart from the feeling they were meant to express, as a virtual apostasy from God, and from that spiritual worship which alone can please Him. He who is author of the spirit,[1] they said, must be served with the spirit. He who is emphatically "the holy,"[2] and is too pure to look upon iniquity,[3] whose eye surveys the heart,[4] requires holiness and moral purity from his subjects, that "righteousness" which in regard to Himself is piety, and which between man and man is justice.[5] Religion was thus resolved into its fundamental principles. "What, O man," exclaimed the teacher, "doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."[6] "To what purpose, saith the Lord, is the multitude of your sacrifices? I delight not in the blood of bullocks or goats. Bring no more hollow oblations; incense is an abomination to me; your new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, my soul hateth; they are a trouble to me; I am weary to hear them. Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed; judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."[7] Woe to them who offend against the eternal laws of justice; who join house to house and field to field; who get riches without regard to right;[8] who extortionately oppress the poor, the helpless, and the stranger. Woe to the prophets who make a trade of their calling, and the priests who teach for hire.[9] Woe to those who amass wealth by usury, and refuse bread to the hungry.[10] The just man is liberal and kind;[11] ever ready to relieve the distressed, to feed the poor, to clothe the naked; he is full of compassion and mercy,[12] and lives in truth, peace, and charity with all men.[13]

[1] Isaiah xlii. 5; lvii. 16; Ezek. xviii. 4; Zech. xii. 1.
[2] Isaiah v. 16; vi. 9; lvii. 15.
[3] Hab. i. 13.
[4] Jerem. xi. 20; xvii. 10.
[5] Jerem. xii. 1; Isaiah xxviii. 17; lvi. 1; lxi. 8; Zech. viii. 17.
[6] Micah vi. 6.
[7] Isaiah i. 11, sq.; Joel ii. 13; 1 Sam. xv. 22; Hos. vi. 6; Amos v. 21.
[8] Isaiah v. 8; Jerem. xvii. 11; Amos iii. 10.
[9] Micah iii. 11.
[10] Ezek. xviii. 7.
[11] Isaiah xxxii. 8; lviii. 7.
[12] Zech. vii. 9; viii. 16, 17.
[13] Ib.

6. *The "Second Coming."*

Thus had the Jewish prophets laid the foundation of Christianity. Its internal meaning as well as external form were plainly announced long before its actual appearance. Ancient Judaism had already established a connection between the elements of the Messianic reign; a new legislator would establish a new law,[1] "a reign of righteousness, whose law would be inscribed upon the heart."[2] Christianity, by closing with the long-established form of Messianic expectancy, obtained by the coalition a determinate place in history; but in order to raise the theory above the risk of failure, it was compelled to enlarge and, in some respects, alter its meaning. It was necessary to postpone to a future time, in Jewish phraseology, the "αιων μελλων," the more striking external results either of legislation or subjugation usually associated with it. The Messiah of common expectation was a mighty hero descended from David, who was to conquer the enemies of the Jews, and to rule over them for ever. Such, too, was the notion of the first Christians; and hence their disappointment at their Master's death, which for ever made the literal fulfilment of such anticipations impossible.[3] But everything which at the time was wanting for their consolation was speedily made good by what is called the "outpouring of the Spirit." It became necessary that they should either resign their hope, or apply themselves to the task of modifying it, and of putting such a construction on the death of Jesus as should rescue his presumed character. Christianity, which was especially a religion of the future, a consciousness of simultaneous privation and wealth, of "having nothing and yet in hope possessing all things," was well suited to supply the moral power necessary for making the required change. The resurrection doctrine had been long recognised by the Jews. It is announced dogmatically for the first time in the book of Daniel; but it appears much earlier in the more natural and beautiful form of aspiration, in passages seemingly expressing the first efforts of the awakened soul to plume its

[1] "Dixit Rab. Chijah, referendum est hoc ad dies Messiæ—magna res ventura est mundo; lex convertetur ad novitatem et renovabitur Israeli."—Bertholdt, Christologia, xxxi. p. 164.

[2] Thus the Epistle of Barnabas (ch. viii.) describes the object of apostolic preaching as "ἁγνισμος της καρδιας."

[3] Luke xxiv. 21.

energies for an untried and bolder flight.[1] Its more distinct development seems to have been owing to the necessity of accounting for the seeming falsification of those national promises which were believed to be infallible; when a premature death had interposed to prevent many pious Israelites, who ought to have been inheritors of the expected kingdom, from witnessing its establishment.[2] A similar disappointment had happened to the Christians; only in the latter case the "prince of life" himself had unexpectedly succumbed to the power of the grave. But the language of prophecy forbad despondency. It had declared in the name of Jehovah, "From the grave will I rescue them, from death redeem; where are now thy shafts, O Hades! Awake and sing, ye dwellers in the dust; for the dew of Jehovah is like the dew which resuscitates the grass, and earth shall send forth its shadows to a new existence."[3] Christianity adopted this assurance; the disciples had only the alternative of abandoning belief, or of believing in spite of appearances, and their faith, stronger than death, evoked the miracle of the resurrection. Were their master really dead, he could not have been the Messiah he pretended to be; but *being* the Messiah, he *could* not, at least permanently, be a tenant of the grave.[4] His "going away" thus eventually proved the most effectual means that could have been devised for elevating their notions, or, in other words, of bringing down the Holy Spirit into their hearts. They were now enabled to see many scripture passages, which had never before been applied to the Messiah, in a new light; the promise made to David that he "should not see corruption" was transferred to Jesus, who, as they now discovered, had risen from the dead, his sufferings having been a scripturally-predicted necessity. Their apostolic office henceforth consisted almost exclusively in attesting this great fact on which all future belief in the Messiahship of Jesus depended, and they were styled emphatically the "witnesses of the resurrection." Their faith was the outward exponent of their feeling. Poor in relation to the present, but rich in heavenly wealth, they believed that he who had been so meek and lowly in this world, was still Lord

[1] Ps. xvi. 10; xlix. 15. Lessing (Erziehung des Menschengeschlechtes) traces how the idea of immortality grew naturally out of the disappointed hopes of theocratic Judaism; and asks, if it were possible for man to live and die in perfect prosperity and contentment, would he ever have conceived such a notion?

[2] Ezek. xxxvii. 11; Pseudo-Isaiah xxvi. 14.

[3] Hosea xiv. 14; Isaiah xxvi. 19.

[4] Acts. ii. 24

of the next, according to the general Jewish notion ascribing the dominion over the present and the future respectively to the devil and to the Messiah.[1] What may have been the precise views of Jesus as to the mode in which the sequel of his office was to be accomplished, it is impossible to say. The eschatological chapters in Matthew[2] clearly show that the Messianic imagery in Daniel[3] has been applied to him; and supposing the announcement contained in these chapters, though not actually spoken by himself, to contain an approximation to his views, he must either have imagined a living removal to heaven, like Enoch or Elijah, speedily to be followed by the supernatural incidents yet unfulfilled; or he must have anticipated such a fulfilment to follow soon after the death whose approach he foresaw and predicted when he made his last journey to Jerusalem.[4] But whether foreseen and planned by himself or not, to his disciples after his decease the Messianic drama appeared distinctly divided into two separate acts; one containing his human preparatory career down to its tragic termination; the other momentarily expected in his triumphant return. As time passed on without answering expectation, they were tempted in their impatience to invest their master's earthly career with more and more of the ideal glories of the future; and when the generation of his cotemporaries was extinct, and it had become desirable to consign to writing the traditions of his life, every incident received if possible a supernatural colouring, the amplitude of his mental endowment became a miraculous parentage, and the majestic scene of his future coming was in part anticipated by glimpses of a higher character imagined to have been already disclosed in the transfiguration and ascension.

7. *Theory of Atonement.*

Another mode of explaining the great stumbling-block which the disciples, in common with all Jews, encountered in the seeming paradox of the death of the Messiah, is chiefly remark-

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 6, 8; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Gal. i. 4; Clementina xv. 7; Epiphan. Hær. xxx. 16; Ep. Barnab. ii.; 2 Clem. vi.; Hermas, Sim. i.

[2] Matt. xxiv. 15, 30; xxvi. 64. [3] Dan. vii. 13.

[4] The years of the career of Jesus, and his journeys, are variously enumerated: some assign one year only, some three; both accounts are alike uncertain.

able through its connection with the new development of Christianity introduced by St. Paul. The catastrophe which at first took the Apostles by surprise, and confounded their hope, might be interpreted as a *sacrificial* death on behalf of the Jewish nation or a sinful world; and for this view scripture authority might be found, especially in the elegy on the suffering of the "Lord's servant" in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah.[1] It is very improbable that Jesus himself could have intended to interpolate his system, based, as it was, on strict obedience and practical righteousness, with the inconsistent idea of a summary gratuitous expiation to be effected through his death; and certainly the notion, if adverted to by him at all, could not, consistently with the gospel accounts, have been clearly announced to the disciples.[2] But St. Paul, who, distrusting voluntary effort, sought justification and salvation in an imparted spiritual grace, found in the death of Jesus, which had really acted beneficially in spiritualising the ideas of many of his followers, an external pledge or symbol for a general renewing of the spirit; and he discovered a confirmation of this view, and of its universal applicability, in the justification and grace announced to uncircumcised, but believing, Abraham.[3] The theory of sacrificial atonement has since usurped so large a space in Christian theory, that it is necessary to say a few words as to its origin.

The word sacrifice, which, in oriental phraseology, might include any kind of devotional exercise, was limited to the sense of "offerings," in consequence of their great proportionate importance and frequency. Their import varied with the feelings and intention of the worshipper; and the pangs of conscience, which taught man that he was sinful, changed the simple gratulatory or supplicatory offering into an expiation or atonement. The Deity of rude times is an envious or jealous being; hence it was essential that the offering should be costly, something whose loss should be heavily felt by the sacrificer, even his own life or that of his offspring. All children are imitators, and imitation was the religious expression of the world's children. The stern and terrible in nature is more readily appreciated by rude men than the beneficent, and as the world appeared a scene in which toil and death are the price inexorably exacted for fertility and life, superstition submitted itself to the ordeal prepared for it,

[1] Comp. Acts viii. 32; Rom. iv. 25; 1 Pet. ii. 24; Ep. Barn. v.; 1st Ep. Clem. ch. xvi. [2] Luke xxiv. 21. [3] Rom. iv.

mimicking the course of nature, which at the close of each year seems to recover a renewed being at the price of self-immolation. This was the meaning of the cruel tribute which Athens periodically paid to the Cretan Moloch, the power said to devour his own offspring, who exacted the sacrifice of the first-born from the Kings of Moab and Phœnicia. When the savage saw earth parched with drought, its fruits failing, and the young of man and beast perishing, he thought his oblations had been too scantily performed, and determined to offer one of his children in order to preserve the remainder.[1] The anniversaries of the solstices and equinoxes, especially the vernal, were the occasions generally chosen for great sacrificial celebrations. It was then that the bull, the emblem of the year or of nature, was obliged to die, or, what is the same thing, to be carried into the presence of Eurystheus. Then, too, the Israelite made a bloody atonement to the "Destroyer," the ruthless exactor of the first-born, smearing the doors with blood, and connecting what had once been probably a type of the liberation of the elements with the traditional escape of his fathers out of the land of bondage into "the Lord's rest."

The Old Hebrew Sacrifices.

The ancient Hebrew practices present a very obvious analogy to the barbarous habits of those surrounding tribes to whose works and worship they are said by their own prophets to have conformed.[2] The very foundation of their extraordinary privileges was the "faith" of their great Patriarch in the authenticity of a divine command to kill his own son. And when the King of Moab offered his son, the heir-apparent to his throne, "upon the wall," in sight of the besieging Israelites, the latter were seized with panic, and fled, not, as Josephus pretends, from motives of humanity and pity for the Moabitish King, but because they believed in the magical efficacy of the sacrifice they had witnessed, or, as the historian himself expresses it, because "There was great *indignation* (or wrath of God) against Israel."[3] Although the expedition had been inaugurated by Jehovah's prophet, its success was prevented by the performance of a superstitious act, interdicted, indeed, in our present

[1] Dion. Hal. i. 23, seq. [2] Psalm cvi. 35, 36. [3] 2 Kings iii. 27.

Levitical code, but evidently believed at the time by Hebrews as well as Moabites, to be a charm of certain efficacy to procure divine favour. Accordingly it is expressly related of the later kings, Ahaz and Manasseh, that they "burned their sons in the fire," and that the great majority of the monarchs of Jerusalem followed "the evil example of their fathers." What could have been the practice of those fathers anterior to the admonitions of the prophets, or when the prophets themselves scarcely censured,[1] or, like Samuel and Elijah, themselves adopted, the murder of a man as a sacrificial rite?[2] Even David, that perfect servant of Jehovah, who "went fully after the Lord," acquiesced, on occasion of a famine, in the murderous atonement executed by the Gibeonites,[3] burned the Amalekites in the ovens of their own idol, and destroyed the Moabites by measuring them out with a line upon the ground, a third to live, two-thirds to die. It has commonly been believed that the Moloch worship, forbidden by the Levitical law under pain of death, was for the first time introduced by Solomon; that this highly religious and wise monarch had so little profited by the law's plain precepts, and by the special revelations with which he was himself favoured, that in his old age he apostatised through the influence of the inmates of his harem, and exposed himself to the law's extreme penalty through an unnatural appetite for Moloch worship. The great improbability of this suggests the idea of a mistake, or inversion of view, on the part of the arrangers of the sacred records, who, in their patriotic anxiety to represent their ancestors in the most favourable light, may have unhistorically attributed to them the ideas of a more enlightened age. The same anachronism which anticipates the use of the name Jehovah,[4] that of the city of Jerusalem, the observance of the Sabbath, and the rite of circumcision,[5] may have been adopted in the other case in order to rescue antiquity from reproach, and especially to fortify the sanctions of the law by glorifying the name of Moses. Yet an indiscriminate admission of this very natural misrepresentation would be to thwart its probable object. It would be to suppose the nation to have derived so little benefit from the divine oracles with which they were favoured, that they became ever worse instead of better, and after all the discipline of law and prophets were left in a

[1] Micah vi. 7. [2] 1 Sam. xv. 33; 1 Kings xviii. 40. [3] 2 Sam. xxi. 9.
[4] Comp. Exod. vi. 3. [5] Comp. Josh. v. 4, 7, 9.

deeper state of degradation than when they received them. Surely it is more natural to suppose that the worship of Moloch, and practice of human sacrifice belonged to the earlier more than to the later period of Hebrew history, that it was identical with the first rude worship of that "jealous" and "consuming" power symbolised in the fire and whirlwind, who demanded the first-born of man and beast for sacrifice;[1] that in process of time these horrid rites were exchanged for milder ones, when the Bible writers eagerly vindicated the character of their God by transferring to old times improvements of newer date, making inveterate practices appear as detestable innovations, for which, with uncontrollable perverseness, the Jews were ever deserting their own purer theism.

8. *The God of the Old Testament.*

Every attentive reader of the Bible must have had a vague consciousness of something incomprehensible, even revolting, in early Hebrew history. When, familiar with the God of the New Testament, we turn to the Old, in expectation of there finding the same friend and father, we are repelled at beholding a God of fear, a jealous tyrant, who himself instigates to the crime he condemns, and hardens men's hearts in order to signalise his glory by punishing them. Arrayed in the moral and physical imagery calculated to create fear, he is always threatening to "break out" and to "devour," and in his fury sacrifices both friends and foes indiscriminately. He puts a lying spirit into the mouth of his own prophets, and so lays a trap for his people which they could not escape. His very kindness is frightful, because fitful and unintelligible; oftentimes even insidious and malignant. He gives quails to destroy men, and appoints statutes that were "not good," in order to induce them "to pass their sons through the fire," and for the express purpose of making them desolate.[2] He is an inconsistent God. He is angry, to the extent of destroying his own work; repents, yet is incapable of change; he is seen by the elders of Israel, yet is invisible and past finding out; he rests, yet, according to Isaiah, requires no rest; he ap-

[1] Exod. xiii. 2, 12; xxii. 30; xxxiv. 19, 20; Levit. xxvii. 26; Numb. viii. 17; xviii. 15; Ezek. xx. 26.

[2] Ezek. xx. 26.

points elaborate sacrifices and rites of worship—and yet declares that he requires no sacrifices; that all he wants is a contrite and obedient heart. The only way of putting any intelligible construction on these incongruities is to suppose that our present Bible presents to us, in one simultaneous view, the conceptions of different ages, which we must arrange in chronological order as well as we can for ourselves; that among the Hebrews, as among other nations, there was a progressive development of better ideas about God and the mode of worshipping him, which the compilers of the sacred volume, in their anxiety to uphold the credit of their ancestors and the continuity of divine revelation, unconsciously but unwarrantably referred to ruder times. The Deity of rude men is necessarily a God of fear; to them the operations of nature seem angry, tumultuous, capricious; they understand force, but cannot discern rational order and beneficent arrangement; their God is but an overwhelmingly powerful man, with bodily organs, passions, and appetites. In proportion as they become changed themselves, all things appear to change around them. Their God becomes inaccessible and invisible, but at the same time good and merciful; moreover, indifferent to external forms of worship, for he is a spirit, desiring only the service of the spirit. But here the belief in revelation intervenes; and religious men are more solicitous to uphold the unity of God and the consistent purity of his worship, than to trace dispassionately and historically successive alterations of belief and ritual. Old records and memorials are worked up in a new spirit, but many ancient conceptions and legends are unavoidably retained. Hence many glaring contradictions in the first attempts to produce a continuous history of religion. God commands man to do no murder—yet he himself orders Abraham to murder his own son,[1] kills all the first-born of Egypt, sanctions the sacrificial massacres of Jepthah, of Samuel, who hews Agag in pieces "before him," of Elijah, who slaughters the priests of Baal in the deep clefts[2] of the Kishon, of the sons of Saul by the Gibeonites, and that strange and wholesale one commanded by Moses, in which three thousand people fell in one day. If Moses violates his own laws, and Jehovah himself infringes his own humane provision not to inflict needless depredations on

[1] It is obviously absurd to pretend that Abraham's act was exceptional, when the whole hopes and theology of the nation confessedly depended on it.

[2] Comp. Isaiah lvii. 5.

the country of an enemy;[1] if he calls himself the especial protector of a people the majority of whose kings "followed the evil example of their fathers" in offering human sacrifices to Moloch, admitting, by the very terms of the laws prohibiting it, that the worship had been offered to himself, even within his own temple,[2] the inference is almost inevitable that the prohibitory law must have been of comparatively late introduction, and that the improved worship is mainly due to the exertions of those who, presuming that Jehovah, being one God, could not have two characters, or own two opposite kinds of service, disowned the earlier worship by representing it as a desertion of the true God, and as the ever-recurring cause of those political disasters which judges and prophets had been, from time to time, raised up by that true God to retrieve. Only through some such transposition as the above can the history become at all intelligible. The Deity who prohibits human sacrifices under pain of death, could not have properly tested the faith of Abraham by instructing him to do that which he was known at the time to discountenance and hate. Nor could Jepthah, who comes long after the presumed date of Leviticus, have understood any such prohibition to have been given by the Being who sanctions the relentless law of the vow, under which he offers up his own daughter. It suits the convenience of the compilers of the sacred books to date the origin of idolatry from the Judges, since otherwise no sanction could have been derived from antiquity for a sacred standard of doctrine, nor could they have referred to any orthodox ancestors from whom they inherited the promises connected with their faith. Accordingly, the people who worshipped the calf in presence of the terrors of Mount Sinai, who apostatised to Baal Peor before the eyes of Moses, are said to have "served the Lord faithfully all the days of Joshua, and during all the days of the elders cotemporary with Joshua, who witnessed the great works of the Lord for Israel;" afterwards there arose "another generation, who knew not the Lord;" these "did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim;"—"they *forsook* the Lord God of their fathers who brought them out of Egypt, and served Baal and Ashtaroth." Had these offences been committed ignorantly, they could not have been

[1] Comp. Deut. xx. 19, with Kings iii. 25; Josh. x. 35, seq.; Exod. xxxiv. 13.
[2] Levit. xx. 3; Ezek. xxiii. 38, 39; 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14.

justly visited as sin, nor could they have served to illustrate Hebrew historical theory as to the intimate connection between human conduct and human weal. Strange! that the orthodox religion, those statutes and judgments so lately pronounced by Jehovah's lips, should have had so brief an influence. Commencing with Moses, it only outlasted the generation of Joshua! Even during that interval it suffered interruptions of unknown duration, and we sometimes find the prophets telling a wholly different tale, and denying its existence in the primitive period altogether. Amos, in a passage repeated by Stephen in Acts, in utter contempt of the pretensions of the ancient Hebrews,[1] declares that they had all along been sacrificing not to Jehovah, but to Moloch and Chiun, or, as the partisans of a better faith would say, "to devils, not to gods."[2] "They did not destroy the nations as the Lord commanded them, but were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works; yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood to the idols of Canaan."[3] These offences are prohibited in Leviticus;[4] still the question remains, was the Levitical prohibition given *before* the crime was committed, or *after?* Now if, as we are expressly told by Jeremiah, the elaborate sacerdotal system of Leviticus did *not* date from the time of Moses,[5] why should it be gratuitously assumed that the prohibition of these malpractices was given long anterior to their recorded commencement, at a time, too, when arts more necessary and homely than writing would seem to have been unknown? The people who, under Moses, are imagined to have had an elaborately-detailed code are lawless savages under the Judges;[6] under Moses they have richly-appointed sacrifices and dresses, ranging the desert with skilful artificers in gold and silver; under Saul they have not even a common smith to make a spear or sword.[7] In all this it is impossible not to feel that there must be some unacknowledged misapprehension, and that the better regulations of Hebrew law were probably late discoveries, originating in the civilising influences operating under the Kings; that when we are told it was Jehovah, the true God of the prophets, who led the people out of Egypt, and had accompanied them ever since, we must understand that, if identical in name, his attributes

[1] Amos v. 26; Acts vii. [2] Lev. xvii. 7; xx. 3. [3] Deut. xxxii. 17. [4] Psalm cvi. 37. [5] Jer. vii. 22. [6] Judg. xvii. 6. [7] 1 Sam. xiii. 20.

had changed, causing a moral severance between the actual God and the synonymous ancient one, although there was as yet no conscious perception of the antithesis in his character. When reform began, and the old contaminated worship was first openly contrasted with an amended appreciation of the sacred name hallowed by tradition, it seemed as if in the retrospect there had been a perpetual oscillation between false worship and true,[1] and it was only hesitatingly, and with cautious reserve, that a few of the boldest thinkers of much later times ventured to denounce the God of the Old Testament as the Devil, or as Moloch. The prophets, very naturally, tried to make the moral transition as easy as possible, by introducing new principles under the well-known ancient name. They represented their own lessons as the old law, the true statutes and judgments of Jehovah, while impliedly exhibiting the ambiguity of their own assertion. "It was not I," says the God of Jeremiah,[2] "who commanded you to build the high place of Tophet, which is in the valley of the sons of Hinnom, in order to burn your sons and your daughters in the fire. No such horrors emanated from me, nor did it ever enter into my mind to conceive that men would commit such enormities. The prophets who directed them were prophets of lies, not emissaries of mine.[3] True, I was the God of your fathers who brought you out of Egypt; but you forsook and forgot me, or rather, you never really knew me.[4] You were worshipping the calf emblem of Moloch, at the very time when you pretend to have been under the guidance of your legislator Moses.[5] Therefore I allowed you to follow the bent of your own corrupt imaginations, and punished you both in the wilderness and up to this day." The ancient idolatry might be described either as rebellion against the true Jehovah, as "things which he could not away with," or as a judicial blindness purposely inflicted by him. He might either say to his misguided people, that they who attached so much importance to vain symbols had not even the small merit of having offered them to himself, since they had been really offered to Moloch and Chiun;[6] or he might say,

[1] In Lev. xx. 3, however, as well as in Jepthah's case and elsewhere, it is plainly admitted that the impure worship had been offered in the name of Jehovah.
[2] Jer. vii. 31. Comp. xix. 4, 5; xxxii. 35.
[3] Jer. xxiii. 13, 32; xxxii. 35.
[4] Jer. ii. 8; Judges ii. 10; Ezek. xx.; Hosea xi. 3.
[5] Amos v. 26; Acts vii. 40. [6] Amos, ut supra.

"your contumacy provoked me to give you *statutes that were not good*;[1] so that it was by a deliberate penal arrangement on my part that you polluted yourselves with your own gifts in that you caused to pass through the fire all that openeth the womb, to the end that I might make you desolate, and that you might know that I am the Lord."

9. *The Hebrew Reform.*

The difficulty felt in accepting an inference without which Hebrew history is unintelligible, and which the Hebrew writings, although avowedly revised by the enemies of Moloch worship, candidly allow to transpire, may perhaps be traced to an unwillingness to think that the authors of so many noble thoughts should have perpetrated such heinous acts. But the perpetration of them is unquestionable; and indeed it will always be found that religious fervour unswayed by reason degenerates into foul or senseless superstition; exemplifying the well-known truth, that the worst acts often accompany the best intentions. If the question be narrowed to the point whether the Hebrews, in the earlier period of their history, offered human victims in the name of Jehovah, their own prophets answer distinctly in the affirmative;[2] and it remains only to inquire when and why they discontinued the practice. It appears that about seven centuries before the Christian era, a movement of religious reform widely extended itself through Asia, whose general object was to bend the rude forms of nature worship into harmony with an improved moral consciousness. In Judæa their reform was doubtless due to the Prophets, whose God was no longer, morally speaking, the same as the God of the common people. The Assyrian chief Rabshakeh directly asserts this in his derisive reply to Hezekiah's profession of reliance on divine aid: "Is not this the very God whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and has said to Judah, 'Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem.'"[3] But the revolution of opinion had been gradual; and the mistaken rites so emphatically repudiated afterwards were not at first severely noticed. Hosea had sternly

[1] Ezek. xx. 25. It is remarkable that Ezekiel, in quoting the passage—Exod. xiii. 12, and xxxiv. 19—omits the redemption clause inserted in our present text. Comp. Rom. i. 24.

[2] Levit. xx. 3; Ezek. v. 6, 11; xvi. 22, 47, 52; xx. 16, 31.

[3] 2 Kings xviii. 22; 2 Chron. xxxi. 1; xxxii. 12.

reproved the cruel priests who offered sacrifices that God desires not;[1] but Micah only deprecates them as superstitious superfluities,[2] and Isaiah's silence in regard to the cotemporary proceedings of Ahaz[3] may, instead of acquitting the monarch, be considered as implicating himself. Eventually, however, the prophets succeeded in carrying out the principle that "mercy is better than sacrifice," and that sin is not to be washed out by bloodshed. It was under their influence that the great external change was effected of abolishing the "high places,"[4] and bringing all the people to take part in a better worship in the capital. The change was difficult. Many refused to attend or to "purify" themselves according to the new regulations; they even ridiculed the proposal, for the real object was the abrogation of the most important and imposing part of the old ceremony, the immolation or bloody token of the old covenant.[5] The quick return of court and nation after the death of Hezekiah to idolatry, proves the feeble hold which the new opinions had yet gained; and Manasseh expressly sanctioned the ancient rite by delivering his own son to the flames.[6] The long-continued reign of this king repressed the efforts of reformers; but in the 18th year of his second successor, when many adherents of reform had obtained high offices in the State, and most of the priests had adopted its principles, a favourable occasion seemed to have arrived for a new effort. The "book of the law," supposed to have been found in the temple by the High Priest, was probably only a brief exposition of the improved prophetical morality[7] in a sententious form, accompanied with corresponding changes of ceremonial, especially of the passover. Up to this epoch of Josiah's reign, idolatry would appear to have been the established religion; and it was only by some impressive act that the people could be influenced to resign their usual habits. Such an expedient seems to have been the discovery of "the book," a book strangely enough never before heard of as missed or lost, and which, though it naturally caused no astonishment to the High Priest, was both surprising and alarming

[1] Hosea vi. 6, 8, 9; viii. 11, 13; ix. 13. 15, 16. [2] Mic. vi. 7. [3] 2 Kings xvi. 3.
[4] Which had witnessed the too frequent offence of "eating on the mountains." Ezek. xviii. 6, 11.
[5] Gen. xvii. 10; xxii. 16; ix. 12; Exod. 12, 13. [6] 2 Kings xxi.
[7] Possibly represented in our present Leviticus, ch. xvii. to xx. inclusive. Comp. Bertheau, Mosaische Gesetze, p. 197, seq.

to the king. It was now found that the contemplated changes were a revival of the old law, which king and people had immemorially been provoking God's wrath by infringing. The new ceremonies were probably framed as far as possible in analogy with ancient usage, and, by giving form for form, adapted to facilitate the transition. Yet the reform did not appear to outlast the reign in which it was introduced. Even during Josiah's lifetime a conspiracy was formed against his innovations.[1] But their decided though short acceptance contributed to their ultimate success. Their advocates continued the struggle, and the captivity itself gave them a new argument. They employed the old resource of declaring misfortune a punishment for perverted worship; and while the majority of captive Jews, described by the great cotemporary prophet, as going to meet "the king" (*i. e.* Moloch), with perfumes, and "sending messengers to hell,"[2] amalgamated with the kindred superstitions of Babylon, a small but resolute party emboldened by the allied religion and power of Persia, realised the old idea of the "rescued remnant" by re-establishing the pure worship of Jehovah in his own land.[3] Only a small fraction actually returned, but the very fact of their return attested their patriotic zeal. There was no more desertion of Jehovah for other gods, for Jehovah had no longer a rival, the new colonists being all reformers, their imaginations kindled with an elastic Messianic hope immediately connected with the national God. They now began to make collections of the ancient scriptures, remodelling them on their own views; the great object of the compilers being to give reform the sanction of antiquity, and to throw back the better religion of the present to David and Moses. Truth of fact was remorselessly sacrificed to truth of principle. Every renowned historical character became henceforth a perfect example of the approved religion; every national calamity a punishment for incessant recurrences of idolatry. In spite of the Levitical prohibition, the sacrifice of Abraham continued to be a legitimate trial of his "faith," immediately connected with the prosperity of the nation descended from him; and as the compilers felt no awe of captious criticism when they made the rites and ceremonies of a fixed agricultural hierarchy accompany the encampment of the wan-

[1] Jer. xl. 9. [2] Pseudo-Isaiah lvii. 9. [3] Ezek. xx. 30, 40.

dering Israelites, they mingled the dogmas of a later period[1] as well as the incidents of its history with the early annals under the form of prophecy. It was now probably that the Jews discarded the Canaanite from the genealogy of Shem, and enrolled among their kindred the victorious and sympathising Persian.[2] They recoiled from acts once common to themselves, and found in their improved practice a new warrant for their old invasion of Canaan. Their Jehovah, before only one among many gods, was now the universal Deity; in comparison with whom the ancient Baals and Molochs were either degraded into imaginary beings or "nothings,"[3] or took their place, after Magian phrase, among devils. The fluctuating antithetical conceptions[4] of nature worship were permanently parted into two rivals, of whom the sombre aspect (Satan or the Adversary) was banished to Tophet or Gehenna, the fire furnace of the wicked,[5] his abode still forming a memento of his old abominations; until at last it began to be suspected that Abraham's sacrifice was a suggestion of the devil,[6] and that the ancient Hebrew God was only the Demiurgus or "Prince of this world," an impure being, who could not have been the father of Jesus of Nazareth.

10. *Continuance of the Sacrificial Idea.*

Yet inveterate habit could not be wholly effaced, and the sacrificial idea continued. The passover was maintained under a new symbolic form; and though the eating blood and tearing the limbs of the victim were forbidden, the suspicious rite being placed in its purified form under metropolitan surveillance, it was still thought, in spite of prophetic contradictions, that through blood alone sin could be expiated and life ransomed.[7] The payment of redemption money, the self-devotion of the

[1] Of this there are many examples. One of the most striking is that where the rule, "to obey is better than sacrifice," is put into the mouth of Samuel at the very time when he is rigorously exacting the most hideous of all sacrifices. (1 Sam. xv. 22.)

[2] Gen. x. 22.

[3] אֱלִילִים

[4] Comp. 2 Sam. xxiv.; 1 Chron. xxi.; Lam. ii. 4, 5.

[5] Matt. xiii. 42, 50; xxv. 41; Rev. xx. 10, 15.

[6] "Masiphat, prince of the devils, went to God and said, 'If Abraham indeed loves thee, let him offer his son as a sacrifice.'"—Fabricii Cod. Ps. V. T., vol. i. 861; ii. 120.

[7] Wettstein to Heb. ix. 22; Gfrörer's Urchristenthum, ii. 188, 190.

Nazarites, and the right of circumcision, are all sacrificial substitutes; and it is clearly indicated in Exodus,[1] as well as in Rabbinical prayer-formularies,[2] that the latter ceremony was looked upon as one of them. And though in later times redemption or substitution was the rule, there remained a tendency to revert to the more direct and efficacious expedient on occasions of strong excitement.[3] The story of the man found by Antiochus reserved for sacrifice in the temple is but feebly contradicted by Josephus; and if, amidst the vaunted civilisation of Athens and Rome, the ostensible prohibition of human sacrifices did not prevent their occasional recurrence, we cannot be surprised that the ancient traditions and practices of the Jews should have caused a share of somewhat justifiable suspicion to attach to their secret mysteries. Atonement by blood has ever been their great religious idea. Established by Abraham, it was kept up in their theory of private vows and of public warfare; and, though mitigated in practice, has never been wholly discarded. The Hebrews, in their contempt for foreigners, regarded them as animals for sacrifice, and the notion was adopted by the prophets. Isaiah announces that near Jerusalem, or "Ariel," (*i.e.* God's hearth) God's sacrificial metropolis, Tophet stood ready prepared for celebrating a holocaust of the enemy.[4] Egypt had in old time been the expiation as well as spoil of Israel, the substitutive offering of first-born for first-born required by Jehovah. The days of Gibeon and Midian were fearful precedents of the same kind.[5] The defeat of Sennacherib and of Pharaoh Necho[6] were each of them a great "Cherem" or votive sacrifice; such, too, was the impending destruction of those ancient rivals of Israel, the Idumeans, who, from the time of the exile, were especially the "devoted,"[7] the type of all that was most obnoxious in Heathenism. In this feeling, the expiatory value of blood was exemplified on the largest scale in the Messianic theory. Israelitish depression would, "in the year of the Redeemer of Zion"[8] be requited a hundred-fold on the ancient foes, whose anguish would at once

[1] Exod. iv. 24–26. [2] Schröder's Judenthum, pp. 341, 343.
[3] Ghillany, Menschenopfer der Hebraer, pp. 106, 623, 625, 653.
[4] The writer adds, "Yea, for *the King* it is prepared."
[5] Whoso sheds the blood of the ungodly, said the Rabbis, is as meritorious as he who offers sacrifice.—Jalkut Simeon, fol. 245; Bamidbar Rabba, f. 229. Under the name of the ungodly seem to have been included Christians. Eisenmenger, i. 689, 735, 756; ii. 203.
[6] Jer. xlvi. 10. [7] Isaiah xxxiv. 2. [8] Isaiah xxxiv. 8; lxiii. 4.

satisfy Hebrew vengeance, and atone for Hebrew sin. The "great day of the Lord," that fearful retribution which was to precede the Messianic kingdom, would, as in other instances,[1] be an atonement, by which the Heathen would be instrumental in consummating Hebrew redemption; and it was in order to hasten these sanguinary predicted antecedents of the establishment of a Messianic kingdom,[2] that the fanatical Jews of Cyrene perpetrated one of the most horrible massacres recorded in history.[3]

And if atoning virtue accrued from the death of criminals and enemies, how much more might be expected from the unmerited suffering of the righteous Israelite. "Precious in the sight of the Lord was the death of his saints."[4] The reformers who discarded Moloch worship inconsistently retained the theory on which it was founded. They used sacrificial language in reference to the uncomprehended inequalities of Providential dealing, for pain and death could not have existed without a cause; and it was less repulsive to suppose the good to expiate the misdeeds of the wicked, than to imagine evil as wantonly inflicted. The prophet had appealed against popular abominations to the plain dictates of humanity. Yet unmerited suffering was a problem difficult even to himself. The mysteries of Providential retribution resembled the usurious dealing of the householder in the parable, rigorously exacting payment for an unjust debt; and all that the greatest of prophets could do was to find an explanation in the very theory which had been the basis of superstitious pollution, pointing out the suffering righteous as a "sin offering" who bore the iniquity of his fellows, and so healed their sorrows.[5] "Thou knowest, O God," says the martyr Eleazar,[6] "that I could even now escape, yet for the sake of the law I am willing to die a fiery death; therefore, be thou gracious to thy people, let my suffering on their behalf suffice thee; and instead of their lives accept thou of mine."[7] The

[1] Exod. xxxii. 29. [2] Comp. Zech. ix. 15. [3] Dio Cass. lxvii. 32.
[4] Psalm cxvi. 15. [5] Isaiah liii.
[6] 4 Maccab. vi. p. 506; comp. p. 518 and 2 Maccab. 630.
[7] See the prayer attributed to Polycarp at his martyrdom in Euseb. H. E. iv. 15, and the letters of Ps. Ignatius. The same idea is said still to prevail in some Jewish communities. Rabbi Joseph, the son of Joshua, relates that when the son of a Jewish renegade was burnt by order of Charles the Fifth, "the Lord smelled a sweet savour;" and a letter from Jerusalem describes the death of those who perished in the earthquake of 1837, as an atoning sacrifice for Israel.—Daumer, Feuer und Moloch dienst der alten Hebraer, p. 33.

results of martyrdom were twofold—purification and glory to the sufferer, and benefits of example and atonement for the people. The penances of the just were a "treasure in heaven," constituting a fund of communicable desert, and the reckoning between Jehovah and his people was treated as a commercial balance of accounts. Rabbi Judah the "holy" suffered the tooth-ache for thirteen years; during those years it was affirmed that no living thing died in Israel, and no woman miscarried.[1] The death of the righteous being superfluous in regard to himself, operated on the general balance of account in favour of the people; that of the High Priest was considered a general satisfaction for sin, so that the involuntary shedder of blood became by that event at liberty to return in safety to his home.[2] "Why," says the Talmud,[3] "did the sons of Aaron die on the day of atonement? That ye may learn that as the day of atonement makes expiation for Israel, so also doth the death of the righteous." Again, "Why does Scripture relate the death of Miriam immediately after the directions about the red heifer?[4] To teach that as the ashes of the heifer atone for Israel, so doth the death of the righteous." In treatise Meschilta, R. Jonathan appeals to the examples of Jonah,[5] Moses[6] and David,[7] to show how patriarchs and prophets offered their lives for their people; and it was an impression handed down from early times that the same self-immolations of chiefs and princes often met with in profane history,[8] in which the devoted hero undergoes a voluntary death at the command of an oracle or soothsayer, had repeatedly occurred among the Hebrews, and that the extraordinary deaths of Moses and Aaron by God's appointment were not mere natural events, for the "eye of Moses was not dim, nor his natural force abated," but self-inflicted forfeitures, sublime acts of sacrificial self-devotion for the public good.[9]

[1] Gfrörer, Urchrist. ii. 187. [2] Numb. xxxv. 25, 28.
[3] Gfrörer, ii. 186. [4] Numb. xix; xx. 1. [5] Jonah i. 12.
[6] Exod. xxxii. 32; Numb. xi. 15. [7] 2 Sam. xxiv. 17.

[8] The death of Jesus is compared by Origen to these cases of voluntary self-devotion among the heathen. He says (vol. i. p. 349), it is reasonable to suppose the order of nature to be such that the voluntary death of a just man for the commonweal is able to avert the famines, pestilences, or sterility produced by evil dæmons.

[9] Origen (on John, and Agt. Celsus, i. 31) adopts this view. He says that the death of the righteous has a powerful effect in bringing about the downfall of the evil one. (Agt. Celsus, vii. 17; viii. 44.)

PART II.

THE PAULINE CONTROVERSY

AND

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1. *The Pauline Theory of Christianity.*

If such were the state of opinion as to atonement, the apostles would naturally make use of it to account for their Master's death. Its adoption was more especially necessary in the altered Christian theory of St. Paul. The idea which Jesus had suggested of human perfectibility and indefinite approach to God by effort could not but be unsatisfying to the "hungry and thirsty" spirit, anxious for repose, yet deeply feeling its own weakness. Man self-convicted of sin, of having "fallen," or become estranged from God, is restless until the impression is removed; it is not enough that he be in a condition to amend, he must be actually raised and reconciled; he cries, "Wretched that I am, who will deliver me from this death in the body? for even the commandment ordained for giving life I find to be to me a sentence of death."[1] St. Paul's idea of Christianity nominally differed little from that of Jesus. It was "righteousness;" not, however, man's righteousness, but God's, and acquired for the human subject in an entirely different way. It was "justification;" that is, a passive, or imparted righteousness (not "δικαιοσυνη," but "δικαιωσις"), an external guarantee for the reality of its acquisition being provided in the atoning efficacy of Christ's death, or through some mysterious symbolical reaction of his death on us. The Mosaic law (and to St. Paul, as to Jesus, Mosaic law was nearly the revealed expression of law generally), as proceeding from a divine source, was neces-

[1] Rom. vii.

sarily just, spiritual, holy; and supposing perfect conformity with this perfect rule, righteousness, with its results of life and happiness, might through that law have been effectually realised. But man has a twofold nature; he has within him a principle allied to the divine (νους, or ὁ εσω ανθρωπος), but so inseparably mixed up with the carnal man (ανθρωπος σαρκικος or ψυχικος), that he cannot act as the better principle prompts.[1] He apprehends, but cannot realise, righteousness; and the very law which informs and should direct his conscience becomes a snare or instrument of sin to him. This unhappy state of internal conflict, which under the law made righteousness unattainable, would have continued for ever had it not been for Christ; who, at a certain pre-ordained epoch of the world's history, was "sent forth," as the Messiah, to establish a higher principle of union and peace. The example of perfect conformity to the divine will personally exhibited by Jesus, had produced in his followers an entirely new feeling of *assured salvation*, evidenced by *faith* in his pretensions and adherence to his cause. St. Paul takes his stand on the famous prophetic axiom, "the just shall live by faith." His doctrine of faith and grace reflects in its theoretical connection with Christ's person the historical relation of Jesus to the older Apostles. The gospel is "the power of God for salvation," conditioned upon faith. Faith is the subjective condition of objective reconciliation; it is belief in the Atonement, the individual acceptance of those means which God, of his free grace or mercy, provided for the reconcilement of the world, and the satisfying of his offended justice. Man must be content to receive as favour what he cannot attain by effort. Christ took upon himself the curse incurred by human short-coming, and man, by faith in the merits of his death, shares the resulting immunities. But faith is not the mere external adhesion to a creed or theory; it carries with it a revolution of the heart; it is an absolute self abandonment to Christ and mysterious

1 "Ὁ νομος πνευματικος εστι, εγω δε σαρκικος ειμι." (Rom. vii. 14.) St. Paul, in this doctrine, follows cotemporary Jewish opinion; according to which there were two mental dispositions, the evil being as impossible entirely to control as the "working of leaven in the lump." (Gfrörer, Urchrist. ii. p. 89, sq.) This evil propensity, or "old leaven," was to be extirpated in the Messianic days. (Ib. p. 291.) The Talmud says, "In futuro sæculo auferet Deus ab Israelitis præputium cordis (figmentum malum), neque obfirmabunt amplius cervicem adversus Creatorem suum, juxtà id quod scriptum extat (Ezek. xi. 19); tollam cor lapideum è carne vestrà, et reddam vobis cor carneum."—Comp. 4th Esdras vi. 26, 27.

union with him; it is not mere belief in his vicarious atonement and revival; it implies, beyond this, an inward change through which we too partake in his death and resurrection by becoming dead to sin and spiritually alive to God. So that while freely opening to us that reconciliation or "justifying grace" which appears unattainable under the law, it contains in itself the mental regeneration securing our participation in it. For justification is not (what, in fact, it had been to the old prophets and to Jesus), forgiveness only, the mere reckoning a person innocent who is really guilty; it is the reckoning or estimation of God, and therefore the real objective estimate of a regenerated nature as altered by the righteousness of faith."[1] The Christian is baptised to Christ's death. Henceforth the "man of flesh," the "old Adam," or carnal principle, which could not realise righteousness by quantitative fulfilment, is dead and crucified with Christ; but dying with Christ, we also live with him; and if we indeed live[2] in Christ's spirit, sin becomes impossible, since its cause is eradicated.[3]

St. Paul's Christology is a succinct expression of his Christianity. The "saving power" of the latter is personified in its Author, who regenerates the human breast by making it his own dwelling-place, the living theatre of his resurrection. Christ is not the man of flesh, the merely human Messiah having to complete, by a supplementary "second coming," the technical outlines of his office; he is the "spiritual man," or "second Adam," the "Lord from heaven," the regenerating principle "sent forth into the heart," that higher life by virtue of which the carnal principle in each of us,[4] together with the system of legal coercion provisionally adapted to it is for ever extinguished. The death of Christ is thus, to St. Paul, the death of Judaism; "the law sinks into the subordinate condition of a schoolmaster, Christianity is a new thing, and every Christian "a new creature."[5] He enjoys the prophetic promise of "power from on high," which may be represented either as an afflation of the divinity,[6] or as a visible manifestation of the Son

[1] Opposed to the "ιδια δικαιοσυνη" under the law. [2] Rom. viii. 9, 10.

[3] Since he that is dead is free from sin (Rom. vi. 7), and this in two ways: 1st, as cleared by a vicarious infliction of punishment; 2ndly, as purified by escape from a sinful nature. Thus was fulfilled the Rabbinical notion about the eradication of the evil propensity.

[4] 1 Cor. xii. 12. [5] 2 Cor. v. 17. [6] Acts ii. 2; John xx. 22.

of God to the senses of the convert.[1] The conversion of St. Paul is related thrice in the Acts, and is often alluded to by the Apostle himself. If in one passage[2] the impression made upon him seem to have the sense of an objective apparition, parallel with those of Cephas, James, &c., others distinctly indicate its subjectivity,[3] and even in the Acts it is admitted that both voice and vision were manifested not to by-standers, but to Paul only.[4] In short, it was an irradiation of the spirit from within, not from the elements without; it was not what Paul saw, but what he "discerned spiritually," and therefore believed at least as implicitly as if he had seen.[5] Either way, assurance was gained of the great fact of the resurrection,[6] through which Paul became, not so much blinded, as aware of his former blindness,[7] and, by his eventual re-illumination, an Apostle, that is, a witness of the resurrection,[8] and a new or regenerated man. "There fell from his eyes, as it were, scales (of prejudice)," and he received at the same instant both the sight of the eyes, and the insight of the Holy Spirit. Within his mind Christ had literally fulfilled his promise of destroying the old temple, and building it up again in three days;[9] the true temple being the regenerated human mind

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 2; Gal. i. 12. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 8; comp. ix. 1.

[3] Gal. i. 16; 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18; iv. 4, 6; v. 5; xii. 1. In Gal. i. 16, Paul describes his conversion as an occurrence wholly within the limits of his own soul, independent of external circumstances and of communication with other persons.

[4] The assertion (Acts ix. 7), that the attendants, though seeing no one, "heard the voice," is afterwards withdrawn (ch. xxii. 9); so that the objective vision is reduced to the "bright light," the customary accompaniment of celestial messages, in the present instance being the glorious light which was to "lighten the Gentiles" (Isaiah ix. 2; Acts xxvi. 23), whose splendour of course far exceeded that of the sun; but which, physically speaking, was no unusual appearance at noon-day in the climate of Damascus.

[5] 2 Cor. v. 7. Many similar visions are on record, where a strong impression has been mistaken for an outward fact; and in this sense the whole of ancient mythology may be called a splendid poetic vision. The biographer of Col. James Gardiner, who died in the rising of forty-five, says, that "in relating the history of his conversion, he imagined himself to have been as broad awake during the whole time as ever he was in his life; and he mentions it several times as what undoubtedly passed not only in his imagination but before his eyes."

[6] Acts xxv. 19.

[7] Comp. Acts xiii. 11; xxvi. 18; 2 Cor. iii. 14. Blindness is a standing New Testament symbol of the unconverted state (see Acts xxvi. 18; xxviii. 27; John ix. 40; xii. 40; Rom. xi. 8, 25); and baptism was called by the ancient church "illumination," "φωτισμος."

[8] Acts i. 21, 22; ii. 32; x. 40, 41; 1 Cor. xv. 15.

[9] Paul having been blind three days. Acts ix. 4; comp. vi. 14.

containing the Holy Spirit within its precincts.[1] The great Christian distinction is independence of the external, in inward assurance of possessing the divine spirit. Through this all moral estrangement is at an end; they who have the Spirit of God are sons of God, intimately connected and united with Him; they receive not, like the Jews, a task-work of servitude and fear, but the spirit of adoption; and the Apostle reproves the folly of the Galatians for returning to the "beggarly elements" of legal observance or Judæo-Christianity, instead of abiding by that faith which needs not the restraints of law, since it naturally brings forth fruits superior to law. Faith is the first in a series of links spiritually uniting us with Christ and with God; and since all spirit is in close relation,[2] and man's higher spirit a portion of the divine,[3] our close relation to God is confirmed by his own infallible warranty, and our subjective conviction comprises the objective attestation of the universal spirit.[4] Christianity thus fulfils its mission by shifting its ground. What was before contemplated by means of effort, is here already accomplished by means of grace. St. Paul's Christianity differs from that of Jesus as an imparted influence from without differs from moral effort from within; the one proceeds (primarily, at least,) from man, the other comes down from God. St. Paul's explanations are vague and mystical; the terms "atonement," "death," and "life," shift perpetually from the literal to the figurative. But the deep things of God, we are told, can only be discerned spiritually; the spiritually minded overleap these difficulties; and since to the spiritualised eye time and space exist not, the great Christian change which, with all its glorious consequences, is sometimes represented as the instantaneous result of faith, is elsewhere made an object of hope and distant expectation,[5] appearing in its ordinary character of a prolonged process, through which the human mind is gradually brought into complete unison with the will of God.[6]

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16.

[2] Comp. 1 Cor. xii. 4, 11, 13. Philo says, "The divine may be extended, but cannot be parted or separated." Hence the doctrine of divine emanation.

[3] 1 Cor. iii. 16.

[4] 1 Cor. ii. 10; Rom. viii. 16.

[5] Rom. viii. 24.

[6] Rom. xii. 2.

2. *Christian Universalism.*

The change introduced by St. Paul, though seemingly small, had important consequences. His system, though still Jewish, tended to subvert Jewish exclusiveness. It pronounced the law, as such, to be no longer binding; yet retained its beneficial results under the name of "fruits of faith," or "of the spirit." Although St. Paul did not create Christianity, he expressed more fully and elaborately what it implied. If it was a consciousness of divine reconcilement and reunion based on an inward moral change, the symbol of the atonement with its accompanying explanations was an apt and attractive illustration of it. Consisting from the first rather in uprightness of purpose than formal obedience to precepts, it adopted the former with its associated convictions as the religion of humanity, while the precepts which were too special to be generally applicable were dropped. In its moral scope, St. Paul's theory did not essentially differ from that of Jesus. Jesus knew as well as Paul that the moral value of the act depends on inward disposition; and, moreover, in advocating conscientious legalism he seems to have had natural morality in view, and unconsciously transferred to the written objective law the enlarged conceptions of his own mind. When, for instance, he said, "Moses allowed divorce on account of the hardness of your hearts, but from the beginning it was not so;" he showed, by appealing from the formal rule to the natural, the real "plant of his father's planting," that his meaning was to claim fulfilment of the latter, which, however, as a Jew, he could scarcely help in some measure confounding with the former. So enlarged a view of religion could not but outgrow its original limits. Yet Jesus does not appear to have fully understood the universality of his mission. In Matthew he twice emphatically restricts it to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel;" and this restriction must have really proceeded from Jesus himself, for, as Matthew makes him foretell the calling of the Gentiles, there is no reason why he should have gratuitously attributed to him the exclusive view, whereas the increase of Gentile converts offered to the other Evangelists a strong motive for suppressing it. The cases of the centurion and Syrophenician are apologetically related as exceptions, allowed in consideration of the special faith of the parties or their good offices to the Jews; and

since to his followers after his death the first Gentile conversions seemed an anomaly and a surprise, it is certain that Jesus, though he may have anticipated the universality of his doctrine in the sense of a universal Judaism, could have had no idea of the possibility of becoming a Christian without being first a Jew. His followers continued after his death to practise, as of course, and to enjoin conformity to the Mosaic law, even miracle failing clearly to convince them of the propriety of the unconditional admission of Gentiles; so that if Christianity had been strictly confined to its original shape, it would never have been more than it at first appeared,[1] a form or sect of Judaism. But with the increase of Gentile converts there arose a greater liberality of opinion, which, we are told in the Acts, soon led to an open feud between the Judaists and Hellenists, the former quietly remaining in Jerusalem,[2] while the latter were persecuted and dispersed through the country. Stephen, the first victim of persecution, was accused[3] of blasphemy against Moses and against God; of predicting the destruction of temple and law. He met the charge by justifying and even retorting it, showing that the real heresy was the perverted spirit of Judaism which, itself incapable of comprehending the divine acts and oracles, had ever scorned and persecuted those who would have explained them; and in regard to the charge about the temple or "holy place," that visible sign of Jewish exclusiveness, he showed that in this very matter the Jews had themselves been serving, not God, but Moloch, and that in reality all places are the same to God, all temples but artificial symbols of the real temple of Him "whose throne is heaven, and whose footstool earth."[4] St.

[1] Acts xxiv. 5, 14; xxviii. 22.

[2] Acts viii. 1, says, all were dispersed except the Apostles. But we ask, why should the Apostles, even if unaccountably exempted from persecution, have chosen to stay in Jerusalem by themselves without any possibility of preaching, or of finding hearers? And who are the "devout men" who bear Stephen to his burial? Who those whom Saul haled to prison? In ch. ix. 26, too, we find the "disciples" already returned to Jerusalem. It is, therefore, probable that the Hellenists alone were dispersed (comp. xi. 20), and that the whole Jew-Christian party remained behind; it being the writer's object throughout to conceal the differences between Christians, and to excuse the calling of the Gentiles by dilating on the obstinacy and antipathy of the Jews.

[3] The accusers are called in Acts "false witnesses" (vi. 13); the same "falsehood" is ascribed (Matt. xxvi. 61) to the witnesses against Jesus; but Stephen, at least, had evidently said enough to justify the charge.

[4] Although we may not have in the Acts the actual speech of Stephen, we have, at least, the outline of the kind of argument which he may probably have used. See Zeller, in the Theol. Jahrbücher, vol. viii. p. 80.

Paul, after his conversion, energetically took up the same line of argument. He showed Christianity from its very nature to be independent of national privileges, and open alike to all men. Yet he did not abruptly sever Christianity from Judaism, or altogether deny the Jewish prerogative; the partialities inseparable from his origin and education occasionally mingled with his arguments, and somewhat perilled his consistency. If Judaism be the Mosaic laws and institutions only, it was a dispensation temporarily adapted to the sinful condition of mankind inherited from Adam, and Christianity is a new thing absorbing and superseding it; but if it be taken in a higher sense as a continuous divine revelation, then Christianity, instead of being new, is only the "gospel of grace" given antecedently to the law to uncircumcised Abraham, and rightfully inherited by his spiritual children. The apologetic tone adopted in Acts, and by Paul himself in the Epistle to the Romans,[1] excusing the exercise of his proper calling as Apostle of the Gentiles on the plea of the perversity of the Jews, seems not altogether consistent with his earlier language, or indeed with his fundamental axioms. He says that "all," whether Jew or Gentile, have sinned, and fallen short of righteousness; that, therefore, all, whether Jew or Gentile, are under the law's curse, for there was a moral conscience where there was no Mosaic law, and consequently the same law was virtually, if not formally, revealed to Gentiles also. All have sinned, but are conditionally redeemed, Christ taking the curse or consequence of sin upon himself, and by his own death extinguishing really as well as figuratively the fleshly infirmities and responsibilities of all the members of his body. And sin being extirpated with the flesh, the law, sin's universal concomitant, is dead also; we are now bound only by the "law of love," "of Christ," or "of the Spirit," that divine fountain from which all, whether Jew or Gentile, may henceforth freely drink.[2] There are no more arbitrary distinctions, neither Jew nor Greek, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision. All died in Adam; all live in Christ.

3. *Paul's Unpopularity.*

The genuine Epistles of St. Paul give anything but a sanguine view of the prospects of his cause. His liberalism was

[1] Ch. x. [2] 1 Cor. viii. 13.

disliked, his motives misrepresented, his apostolic authority denied. He was opposed by the Judaising Christians, who appointed spies to follow his movements and frustrate his efforts.[1] In Galatia and Corinth he was beset by "false teachers" and "false brethren," who, fortified with letters from Jerusalem,[2] controverted his apostleship,[3] impugned his disinterestedness,[4] derided his language and appearance;[5] in short, spared no artifice or calumny to lower him in the estimation of those Gentile converts who by express agreement[6] had been committed to his charge. St. Paul certainly does not accuse the older Apostles by name of complicity in these attacks; but the passionate complaint and sarcastic allusions of "Corinthians" and "Galatians," leave little doubt as to the parties really arrayed agains him. His proud assertion of independence and substantive apostolicity could only have been intended to rebut the exclusive claims of the immediate associates of Jesus; who had they been, as they affected to be, sincerely desirous to second his views, might at once have silenced his adversaries by a public interposition of authority. In competition with the lofty reputations of these recognised "pillars" of the church,[7] he might refer to his widely-extended labours, his sufferings for Christ's sake, his confidence in his own integrity of purpose; but notwithstanding the extraordinary revelation in which he boasted to have "seen" Christ, he could not claim to have seen him in the same way as the older Apostles; and he found with anguish that the vision which was conclusive for himself, could not exercise the same influence over others. His lessons, which had been far from triumphant while he lived, seem to have been nearly obliterated at his death. The churches of Antioch, Corinth, and Rome reverted to a Judaical form of Christianity, and, guided rather by sympathy of opinion than by historical veracity, ungratefully substituted the name of Peter for that of their real apostolic founder. A story, too, was circulated that he was no real Jew, but by birth a heathen, who, having been circumcised in order to become qualified to marry the daughter of the High Priest, had been disappointed in his

[1] Gal. ii. 4, 12.
[2] 2 Cor. iii. 1; comp. the Clementina, xi. 35.
[3] 2 Cor. xi. 5, 23; xii. 11.
[4] Ch. vii. 2; xi. 9; xii. 14, 17.
[5] Ib. x. 10.
[6] Gal. ii. 9.
[7] The use of the word "pillar" is a natural metaphor; but its application to the Apostles seems to have been founded on special Jewish precedent. See Proverbs ix. 1.

suit, and was thus induced to vent his spleen in abuse of circumcision and Mosaical institutions generally. The book of Revelations, indirectly excluding him from the number of the Apostles, stigmatises him as an intruder and deceiver;[1] he is apostrophised by the writer of the Epistle of James as a "vain man;" the Judaising Papias denounces the propagation of vague doctrines alien alike to Christ and to truth.[2] Justin, who certainly could not have been unacquainted with the writings of the Apostle,[3] reminding his interlocutor of the wolves in sheep's clothing who were to come in Christ's name,[4] reprobates those teachers who permitted the eating of meats offered to idols as unworthy the name of Christian, and as disseminating the suggestions of deceiving spirits; and in an early writing of the Petrinic class,[5] Peter is made to ask, with characteristic illiberality, "Why are we to believe that the Lord, who so long familiarly conversed with us, has appeared to you, if your doctrine does not agree with his? why, if really an apostle, do you contend against me, the great pillar of the church, supplanting me in the opinion of the people?" The allusions in this work, which are generally admitted to point, under the name of the great archetype of heresy, Simon Magus, to the Pauline doctrine, and to Paul himself, offer a very painful view of the state of Christian feeling. The author, who writes in the interest of a Jewish form of Christianity, invidiously transfers to Peter the true apostleship of the Gentiles, in opposition to a false pretender. "Many of the Gentiles," says Peter, "have rejected my preaching of the law, having adopted the naughty antinomian doctrine of that detested individual (εχθρου ανθρωπου), so that I, the firm rock and foundation of the church, the ear witness of the Lord's teaching, instead of being believed, am treated as damnable![6] Why, to call me damnable is to accuse God who revealed Christ to me, and Christ also, who pronounced me to be blessed on account of that revelation. Certain persons are attempting by artful interpretation to distort my words in spite of me, to make me out a subverter of the law, while hypocritically suppressing my real opinions;[7] but God forbid I should so act, for this would be to contend against God's law

[1] Ch. ii. 2, and xxi. 14; comp. 1 Cor. xvi. 8, 9.
[2] Eus. H. E.
[3] See Tryph. ch. xcii. p. 316, Otto.
[4] Tryph. ch. xxxv. p. 114, Otto.
[5] The Clementine Homilies, xvii. 3.
[6] "κατεγνωσμενος," the very word used in Galatians ii. 11.
[7] Introductory Epistle, p. 5, in Schwegler's edition; comp. Galatians, ut supra.

given to Moses, whose eternal obligation was attested by Christ. These persons would seem to know my mind, and to understand my words, better than myself; and if they presume to tell these falsehoods during my life, how much farther will they not go after I am dead! Beware then, and whenever a teacher or prophet comes before you unprovided with letters of recommendation from James, take heed lest it be a machination of the devil."[1]

4. *The Older Apostles.*

The conduct of the older Apostles in regard to St. Paul is very remarkable and more than questionable. The agreement entered into at the conference alluded to in Galatians was evidently a hasty concession to his unquestionable success, the full importance of which they did not understand. The "right hand of fellowship" proffered at Jerusalem was immediately followed by the altercation at Antioch; and, indeed, that the offer either meant nothing or was insincere, is proved by the bitter opposition he everywhere met with, and which leaves us to infer either that the acknowledged heads of the church were utterly insignificant and powerless persons, or that, like the dissembling Peter and time-serving James,[2] they acted a double part, secretly conniving at the persecution of one whom they affected to treat as a fellow-labourer and friend. Singularly enough, the moment that any Christian conversion is effected beyond the limits of Judæa, emissaries from Jerusalem appear

[1] Hom. xi. 35. The allusion to Paul in the above expressions is unmistakeable. The suppression of his name only the more betrays the bitterness of the writer. In the introductory Epistle, Peter especially requests that his discourses may be withheld from the heathen, and communicated only to true men of the circumcision; and for this reason, that the consequences of unguarded preaching among the Gentiles had already been made but too evident by the successful artifices of a certain "hated individual." Who this hated person who preached antinomianism to the heathen in opposition to Peter could have been, if not St. Paul, it would be difficult to say. The application is made still clearer by the objection taken to apostleship founded on visions (Hom. xvii. 19); and by the mode exactly corresponding to that mentioned in Acts (viii. 14), in which the true Simon is made to follow the false impostor (Hom. ii. 17). The pseudonym of the Samaritan sorcerer may be explained by the fact, that Samaria was an especial object of Jewish "odium theologicum;" that it was the scene of the first extra-Judaical conversions; and thus became the standing type of heathenish apostacy and heresy. (Comp. Hegesippus in Euseb. II. E. iv. 22; Baur, Die Christliche Kirche, p. 83.)

[2] As represented in the Acts xv. 21; xxi. 20.

upon the stage,[1] not, surely, for the purpose of effecting what had been already completed, but in order to traduce the teacher,[2] to spy out the liberty of his flock,[3] and to lead them back again into bondage. The letters of recommendation borne by these emissaries[4] must have been issued by some persons of recognised authority in the church; and it is difficult to imagine who these could have been if they were not the "seeming pillars," or the Apostles themselves. In Galatians, as well as in Acts, Peter is supposed to acquiesce in the Pauline maxim of salvation by grace only; yet he shrinks from a direct avowal of his sentiments, and not only truckles to Jewish prejudices himself, but would enforce submission to them on others.[5] It may be possible that, at the first interview, the Apostles, pleased at the gratifying news of Gentile conversion, accepted the fact without having any clear apprehension of the consequences; but it is impossible to believe that, after being made aware of them, they alone continued to be deliberately neutral, or that, coinciding from the first with the theories of St. Paul, they had already prejudged the controversy which so long continued to agitate the church. The account in Acts is clearly unhistorical. The writer attributes to Paul what Paul expressly disclaims, the acting in close correspondence with the older Apostles, and by their authorisation. Immediately after his conversion and preaching at Damascus, he is said to have proceeded at once to Jerusalem, and to have there conferred, not with James and Peter only,[6] but with the general Apostolic body. His mission to the Gentiles is not allowed to have been, as it is in Galatians, his original calling, but only resorted to after the failure from some unexplained cause of an attempt to preach in Jerusalem.[7] Paul proclaims to the Galatians the absolute independence of his office; whereas the Acts would represent it as ministerial or delegated; and, with a similar view, gives to Paul's private conference and arrangement with the Apostles[8] the character of a general council and decree

[1] Comp. Acts viii. 5, 6, 14; again, Acts viii. 40; x. 1, 5; and again, ch. xi. 20, 22, 27.

[2] 2 Cor. xi. 12, 13. [3] Gal. ii. 14. [4] 2 Cor. iii. 1.

[5] Gal. ii. 14. [6] Gal. i. 19.

[7] His motive for quitting Jerusalem is variously accounted for, either as dictated by self-preservation, or commanded by a vision in the temple; and it is only at the entreaty of Barnabas that he is prevailed on to go to Antioch.

[8] Gal. ii. 2.

of the church.[1] The writer seems not to be aware that the decree ostensibly issued on Pauline principles is, after all, no more than the Levitical regulation for strangers or proselytes of the gate, whose conversion, exemplified in the precedent of Cornelius, could be no warrant for the general admission of Gentiles; and that the secondary subservient part ascribed throughout the transaction to Paul, whom he affects to treat as a missionary agent instead of an independent labourer and original thinker, is negatived by Paul's own written contradiction. Moreover, he does not see that by making the Apostles speak like Paul, and Paul subscribe a decree to which he could not have consistently and sincerely assented, he is destroying the character of both parties, and exhibiting them as traitors to their own convictions. Doubtless the Apostles may have been weak, foolish men, since they were pronounced to be so by Jesus himself.[2] Nor can any great improvement have taken place when they became known to St. Paul, who professes to have seen little of them, and evidently neither likes nor values what he did see. On the contrary, he says that "they who seemed to be something" added in conference nothing to him.[3] They appear to have boasted of their Israelitish descent, and of being the true ministers of Christ,[4] exhibiting a petty jealousy of others while commending themselves,[5] and vying amongst each other who should be accounted the greatest. But the narrative, which would convict them of falsehood as well as folly, is evidently not to be relied on. For how can we reconcile the mild conciliatory demeanour attributed in Acts to James, who, to make things pleasant, counsels a jesuitical compliance with observances for which he entertains no real respect,[6] with the sudden alarm and altered conduct of Peter and all the Jewish converts at Antioch, including even Barnabas, upon the arrival of his emissaries? The cause of Christianity is ill served by a writer who represents its leaders as destitute of serious convictions, or, still worse, without the honesty to confess and maintain them. Peter's dissembling and vacillation must be admitted; but in regard to the other Apostles, it is a more probable, as well as a more creditable supposition, that they are

[1] Had such a decree as that mentioned in Acts xv. ever been issued, St. Paul could not have failed to appeal to it. Comp. the Tübingen Theol. Jahrbücher, vol. viii. p. 34.

[2] Matt. xv. 16; Luke xxiv. 25. [3] Gal. ii. 6. [4] 2 Cor. xi. 23.

[5] 2 Cor. x. 10, 12, 18. [6] Ch. xxi.

belied in the Acts, and that they in reality never distinctly abandoned their original Jewish leanings. It is only thus that we can understand the terror inspired by their missionaries at Antioch, the influence of the false apostles who boasted against Paul at Corinth,[1] or that of the false brethren who bewitched the Galatians. It is preposterous to suppose that this influence could have existed if it had been counteracted by the authority of the Apostles, or that the community of "faithful Hebrews" which was governed by fifteen successive circumcised bishops,[2] should have thought and acted Judaically in direct opposition to the opinions of its earliest teachers.

5. *The Nicolaitans.*

The sect of the Nicolaitans, twice stigmatised as "hateful" in the Apocalypse,[3] has been the subject of much controversy. The Fathers confound them with the Gnostics, assuming their name to be derived from Nicolas, the proselyte of Antioch, one of the seven deacons of the infant church.[4] This, however, is only an arbitrary application of Scripture data to later heretical appearances; and if there really was any Gnostic tendency in the sect referred to, it can only have been such undeveloped antecedents of Gnosticism as existed in the first century. Many critics have even doubted the existence of a sect bearing this name. It has been conjectured that the Apocalyptic writer may have adopted here, as in other instances, a symbolical term used at the time to designate heresy. Nicolaus, and Eremolaus or Armillus, mean "destroyers of the people," and are Greek translations of the word Balaam, the name of the great Jewish type of false and adverse prophecy.[5] Balaam was admitted to have been a prophet, but one who deliberately chose evil instead of good, and who, by opposing the people of God, was guilty of the inexpiable crime against the Holy Ghost.[6] It has, therefore, been presumed that the "κρατουντες την διδαχην Νικολαιτων" in Rev. ii. 15, are one with "κρατουντες την διδαχην Βαλααμ" in the preceding verse; the imputation of loose morality being generally super-

[1] 2 Cor. x. 12; xi. 13, 22.
[2] Euseb. H. E. iv. 5.
[3] Ch. ii. 6, 15.
[4] Acts vi. 5; Winer, R. W. B.
[5] 2 Pet. ii. 15; Jude 11.
[6] See Gfrörer, Urchristenthum, ii. 402.

added to that of laxity of opinion. It is observable that in verse 6 the *deeds* of the Nicolaitans are condemned, in verse 15 their doctrine. There is a generality of character in the opinions attacked, and the writer evidently espouses the cause of Judaical Christianity against those who "pretended to be Jews, but were not;" who, like the false prophet, threw a stumbling-block in the way of the children of Israel;[1] and since it is impossible to apply the reproof to the Gnostics of the second century, the doctrines complained of must be those adverse to the Jew-Christianity of the first, and it is difficult to conceive what these could have been, unless they were those of St. Paul. St. Paul himself confessed that his preaching was a "stumbling-block" to the Jews. He claims for all Christians that very knowledge of the "deep things of God"[2] which these heretics are said to have pretended to; for when the Apocalyptic writer alludes to "knowing the deep things of Satan, as they say,"[3] he evidently speaks with contemptuous irony, changing the great boast of the adverse party by a slight verbal alteration into an invidious reproach.[4] St. Paul, too, like the false teachers in question, vindicates, as an act in itself indifferent, the eating meats offered to idols;[5] at least, for those who had sufficient "knowledge" to understand its real harmlessness. So far there is nothing in these charges against the Nicolaitans that might not presumably have been urged by a zealous Jew-Christian against Paulinism, whose liberality, as its author himself admits, was apt sometimes to degenerate into licentiousness. But in order to explain the seemingly inapplicable charge of fornication, it is scarcely necessary to have recourse, in this instance, to the possible corruption and libertinism of the Pauline Christians. Every convert who did not adopt the "customs" or Jewish observances was looked upon by Jew-Christians as an unclean liver. "We do not eat or live with Gentiles," say the Clementine Homilies,[6] "their mode of life being impure." Now the Pauline antinomianism was regarded by strict Judaisers as essentially impure and heathenish. The eating sacrificial meats was a participation in the sacrifice, a "μετοχη τραπεζης δαιμονων,"[7] and according to Old Testament phraseology, a sort of fornication. It was not only that par-

[1] Ch. ii. 9, 14. [2] 1 Cor. ii. 10. [3] Ch. ii. 24.
[4] See Zeller's observation on this passage, Theol. Jahrbücher, i. p. 714.
[5] 1 Cor. viii. 10. [6] xiii. 4.
[7] 1 Cor. x. 21; Clem. Hom. vii. 4; Orig. Cels. viii. 30.

taking the offerings often led to actual pollution in excesses connected with them, the implied idolatrous concession was itself a coquetry with demons, or, as expressed in Revelations, a desertion of the "first love,"[1] and, consequently, the two offences were classed together.[2] Of course, complete proof cannot be expected in so obscure a problem; but when we find the Ephesian Christians, who hated the Nicolaitans, congratulated on having unmasked and successfully counteracted the pretensions of certain "false Apostles,"[3] it is impossible not to be reminded of the quarrel between St. Paul and his adversaries as to the claim to apostleship[4] which the Apocalypse would evidently deny,[5] and that only a few years earlier he had been zealously labouring, in his apostolic character, against a formidable opposition among these very Ephesians.[6]

6. *The Gift of Tongues.*

The primitive Christian sentiment, however noble it might be, was easily perverted. Its movements, unswayed by intellect, were irregular and fanatical. The Corinthian church became a scene of utter confusion[7] from this cause, every one coming forward with a revelation or a doctrine,[8] and all clamouring together. The gift of the Spirit (and to be a Christian and to possess the Spirit were the same) manifested itself chiefly in two ways: prophesying, and the gift of tongues. Prophecy, as we know from the Old Testament,[9] included, among other things, that ecstacy and frenzy which in the East was always ascribed either to divine or to dæmoniacal influence; and the character of the "gift of tongues" may be inferred from the severity with which the Apostle rebukes the

[1] Comp. Eph. v. 12, 23, &c.

[2] Acts xv. 29; Rev. ii. πορνεια, as standing at the head of heathen offences, may stand for heathen immorality and profligacy in general, as opposed to Christian "δικαιοσυνη," "justice," or moral purity; and the Apocalypse, which exhibits the austere spirit of early Christianity in regard to celibacy, (xiv. 4. "Homines illi qui Christiani vocantur," says Galen, "ab usu rerum venerearum abhorrent,") may have used it in this sense. A more special meaning has been also attributed to πορνεια, as an infringement of the Levitical regulations as to marriage. See 1 Cor. v. 1; Ritschl, Altkatholische Kirche, pp. 117, 140; Baur's Paulus, pp. 141, 142.

[3] Rev. ii. 2, 6.

[4] 1 Cor. ix. 1; 2 Cor. i. 1; Gal. i. 1.

[5] Ch. xxi. 14.

[6] 1 Cor. xv. 32; xvi. 9.

[7] 1 Cor. xiv. 33.

[8] Ib. 26.

[9] 1 Sam. xviii. 10; Jer. xxix. 26.

disorderly proceedings of his favourite flock. He speaks of the practice, which seems to have been especially in vogue among females,[1] as indicative of childishness in understanding, and as nearly akin to madness.[2] It was not, as afterwards represented in the Acts, a speaking in foreign languages, for a foreign language is not a jumble of inarticulate sounds,[3] and might readily have been interpreted; and since, in the eleventh verse, St. Paul *compares* it to speaking in foreign languages, it could not have been the same thing. The speaking with "other," "strange," or "new" tongues, was the giving utterance to ecstatic, unintelligible sounds, the speaking, as it were, "not to man, but to God," which, though mistaken for inspiration by believers, was not only entirely unedifying, but among unbelievers gave occasion for scandal and ridicule. This "Pneumatic" endowment of the primitive church was afterwards expanded, in the altered sense of speaking foreign languages, into the description of a figurative vision, purporting to fulfil ancient prophecy by the visible promulgation of a new spiritual revelation on the very day[4] which had been signalised by the old revelation upon Sinai. The miraculous story of the fiery tongues of Pentecost may be traced in all its details to traditional Jewish ideology. It is the public establishment of the Christian law, or "new covenant," accompanied with a corresponding spiritual or fiery baptism,[5] on the day and under a form analogous to that attributed to the announcement of the old law, which being assumed to be obligatory on the whole world, was supposed by the Jews to have been enunciated in all the seventy languages of the world at one and the same instant.

7. *Expectations of the Second Coming.*

An eager expectation of Christ's second coming to judge the world and vindicate his elect was the great moral lever of early Christianity.[6] We find it expressed in every varying tone of hope, impatience, disappointment, and may form a near estimate of the date of a given composition from the degree of assurance or despondency assumed on this subject. We are at

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 34. [2] Ib. 23; comp. Acts ii. 13. [3] 1 Cor. xiv. 7, 8.
[4] "The day of Pentecost." Comp. Gfrörer's Urchristenthum, ii. p. 392; Wettstein to Acts ii. 3; Philo, De Decalogo, Mangey, ii. 185.
[5] 1 Cor. 10, 2; xii. 13; Matt. iii. 11. [6] 1 Pet. i. 7, 13; iv. 7; 2 Pet. iii. 11.

first told that the Lord is near, at the very doors; that it is "the last time." St. Paul expects to survive the end of the world, and the immediate cotemporaries of Jesus would not pass away until all was fulfilled.[1] In Matthew the second coming is to take place *immediately* after the destruction of Jerusalem;[2] Luke[3] finds it necessary to allow a certain interval of time during which Jerusalem is to be "trodden down of the Gentiles;"[4] yet all is to be fulfilled within the actual generation. Meantime the Christians are urged, as "strangers and pilgrims,"[5] to abstain from fleshly lusts, to avoid encumbering themselves with superfluous houses and delicacies,[6] their real home being a far-off and better city.[7] Jesus is most distinctly made to assert that there were some standing near him who should not taste of death until they should see him coming in his kingdom.[8] The Epistle to the Hebrews requests a little patience: "Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."[9] The Second Thessalonians[10] endeavours to account for delay by alluding to some mysterious suppression or hindrance of the final series of revelations.[11] Mark[12] finds it necessary to omit one of the corresponding passages in Matthew,[13] and disposes of the other[14] by adopting an opinion prevalent at the time,[15] that an earnest, or even virtual fulfilment of the second coming might be found in the transfiguration. The Second Epistle of Clemens[16] tries to still the uneasiness which began to prevail as to whether the event so long delayed would happen at all; and in the Second of Peter[17] protracted disappointment is found to have degenerated into downright incredulity and scoffing, which the writer can only meet by appealing to the Scripture maxim, that to the Lord a thousand years are but as one day.

8. *The Apocalypse.*

When these expectations were at the highest, the dreadful persecution under Nero, described by Tacitus, produced a pro-

[1] Matt. xxiv. 34. [2] Ch. xxiv. 15, 29. [3] Ch. xix. 11.
[4] Ch. xxi. 24. [5] 1 Pet. ii. 11, 12; Epist. Diogn. v.
[6] Hermas, Simil. i.
[7] Hebrews xi. 10, 14, 16; xiii. 14; comp. 2 Clement. ch. v.
[8] Matt. xvi. 28; and see x. 23. [9] Heb. x. 37; comp. Rev. vi. 10, 11.
[10] Ch. ii. 26. [11] See Baur's Paulus, p. 487. [12] Ch. vi. 7, ff.
[13] Ch. x. 23. [14] Matt. xvi. 28; comp. Mark ix. 1.
[15] 2 Pet. i. 16, 17. [16] Ch. xi. 12. [17] Ch. iii. 3, 4, 8.

found and lasting impression on the Christians. In these horrible events, the first that had occurred of the kind, they recognised the woes and tribulations[1] which were to precede the "second coming," and saw in the perpetrator of them the great Adversary or Antichrist, the idea of whom they had adopted from Judaism and its prophetical descriptions. In great calamity men's thoughts turn fearfully from common routine to scan the inscrutable counsels of the Eternal, and the startled imagination offers a ready ear to prodigies and prophecies. The Sibylline verses speak of Nero as "the great Italian King," the runaway, the dire serpent, the murderer of his mother, who for a time would be preserved unseen, but, soon reappearing with the pretensions of God,[2] would cross the severed Euphrates with many myriads of men, ravage Judæa, and burn the temple; then would the wrath of the Almighty be revealed; there would be earthquakes at Salamis, Cyprus, and Paphos, the innocent would fall, and destruction burst upon the West."[3] A strange notion prevailed extensively, not only in Rome, but in Achaia and Asia,[4] that Nero was not actually dead, but only concealed; that he was beyond the Euphrates among the Parthians, whence he would return with the assembled forces of the barbarians to plunder Rome. The impression continued for many years after the tyrant's death,[5] and adventurers used it for their own purposes. Why Nero should have been singled out to be made the subject of such a story, is not explained; but is was very probably owing to some fancied resemblance of his terrific, yet fantastic, character to the Christian notions about Antichrist. As the false prophet Balaam had opposed Moses; Goliath, David; Sennacherib, Hezekiah; and Antiochus Epiphanes, the ideal deliverer of Daniel, Nero now appeared as the personified power of this world, the great public enemy of Christianity, who was to reappear before the "second coming" of Messiah, and from him receive the recompense of his iniquities. The Jewish prophecies were greedily caught up by the

[1] The "ὠδῖνες," or Messiah woes. [2] Comp. 2 Thess. ii. 4.

[3] Comp. Lücke, Offenbarung, i. pp. 253, 255. The Ascensio Isaiæ, a book of later date, gives a similar prophecy of the return of Nero under the form of "Berial, rex hujus mundi, interfector suæ matris."

[4] Suet. Vit. Ner. ch. lvii.; Tacit. Hist. viii. 2; Augustin de Civit. xx. 19; Lactant. de Mort. pers. ch. ii.

[5] Dio Chrysostom, in the second century, mentions it as still subsisting.

gossips (the "*rumorum avidi*" [1]) of the day; and it was generally expected that persons issuing from Judæa would obtain universal dominion,[2] a presage which Vespasian endeavoured to make available for himself. Nero, it appears, had been informed by the astrologers that, after a temporary defeat, he should recover the "empire of Jerusalem and the East," [3] and was actually projecting an eastern journey for some wild purpose[4] at the time of his death, so that his sudden disappearance might readily be connected with those glowing ideas of an approaching deliverance of the Jews which had already kindled a formidable insurrection in Palestine. The book of "revelations" is generally allowed to have been written about this time.[5] Its apparent date seems to coincide with the short reign of Galba,[6] and it must, at all events, have been composed soon afterwards. In symbolical language borrowed from Daniel, it describes[7] a beast rising out of the sea with seven heads and ten horns, each horn bearing a crown, and on his heads the name of blasphemy. In the 17th chapter the description is repeated; but here a woman sits upon the beast arrayed in scarlet and gold, drunken with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. The woman is explained[8] to mean the city of Rome; the beast on which she rides is the Roman empire; the seven heads are the seven hills;[9] they are also seven successive kings or emperors,[10] five of whom are fallen, the sixth still is, and the seventh is yet to come. In both descriptions there occurs a remarkable incident of analogous import. One of the heads is wounded to death, but is suddenly healed; and in the 17th chapter "the beast that was, and is not, and yet is," is placed eighth in the list of kings, though not as additional to the rest, but one of the already enumerated seven.[11] Each of the seven heads may be said to be the beast himself, inasmuch as each king is only so in reference to the kingdom which he represents and governs; and the singular extinction, abeyance, and revival of the particular king in question, can only be understood of Nero's self-inflicted wound and expected return as Antichrist.[12] The fifth on the list of

[1] Tacit. Hist. i. 5. [2] Suet. Vesp. iv. [3] Suet. ch. xl.
[4] "Secretis imaginationibus." Tacit. Annal. xv. 36.
[5] Baur, Tübingen Magazine, vol. ii. p. 305; De Wette, Einleitung, p. 382.
[6] Ch. xvii. 10. [7] Ch. xiii. 1. [8] Ch. xvii. 18.
[9] Ch. xvii. 9. [10] Ver. 10. [11] Ver. 11.
[12] Tacit. Hist. ii. 8. A report was spread through Asia, "velut Nero adventaret,

Cæsars[1] corresponds exactly with the fifth king of the Apocalypse, and Sulpicius Severus expressly refers to him the enigmatical attribute of simultaneous existence and non-existence.[2] Even Lactantius applies to Nero the Sibylline oracle above cited, and Augustin explains the "man of sin," in Thessalonians, in the same way. But when Nero's return was out of the question, and lapse of time had made impossible the literal accomplishment of the prophecy in its original meaning, every kind of arbitrary exposition was resorted to in order to preserve its credit, and it was variously explained of Chosroes, of Saladin, of worldly power in general, of the kings and dictators of ancient Rome, or the Roman Catholic enemies of Protestantism. Lücke admits that the Revelations never have been, and never can be, fulfilled in their original sense; but what of that? A fulfilment may be discovered which was never contemplated, and the evangelical theologian need never be discouraged.[3]

The time allowed for the continuance of the beast or Roman monarchy is forty-two months. This, again, is the period of woe assigned in Daniel. It is the same "time, times, and half a time," or 1290 days, during which the Gentiles are to tread under foot the holy city,[4] and the woman representing the Christian Church to take refuge in the wilderness.[5] The only difficulty is to determine the length of the "καιρος," or higher unity in which the months and days are comprehended. All these chronological reckonings are founded on the seventy years

vario super exitu ejus rumore, eoque pluribus vivere eum fingentibus credentibusque." It has been pointed out (see Zeller's Magazine, as above, p. 364), that the Hebrew letters of the words Nero Cæsar together make up the mystic number 666—thus: נ 50, ר 200, ו 6, ן 50=306; ק 100, ס 60, ר 200=360. The first beast represents the physical force of antichristian Rome, either as an aggregate monarchy or particular king; the second beast "out of the earth" is the false prophet accompanying Antichrist as Elias did Messiah, and representing the spiritual side of the adversary: for example, the soothsayers, magicians, Chaldæans, &c. who swarmed at Rome. (Tacit. ii. 22.) Balaam, with whom the Egyptian sorcerers opposed to Moses were afterwards arbitrarily connected under the names of Jannes and Jambres (2 Tim. iii. 8; 2 Pet. ii. 15; and the Jerusalem Targum to Numb. xxii.), was the standing type of this ideal personage, who, like Simon Magus (see Clem. Homilies ii. 34; Recogn. iii. 47), made statues speak; and it may possibly be to him that the mystic number refers. See Zullig's Commentary, ii. p. 247; Gfrörer's Urchristenthum, ii. 410.

[1] "Ex quo Divus Augustus res Cæsarum composuit." Tacit. Hist. i. 89.

[2] Hist. ii. 29. "Secundum id quod de eo (Nerone) scriptum est: et plaga mortis curata est."

[3] Offenbarung, 2nd edit. pp. 943, 944. [4] Ch. xi. 2. [5] Ch. xii. 6, 14.

originally assigned to the Babylonish captivity of the Jews by Jeremiah. In order to extend the time of expectation down to Antiochus Epiphanes, the writer of Daniel treats the seventy years as seventy sabbatical periods or weeks of years, the last half-week, or three and a half years, being the critical interval, at the end of which Messiah was to appear. In Revelations, the "καιροι," or unexpired terms of calamity, are dated from Messiah's translation to God's throne;[1] *i.e.* from the death of Jesus. This event was itself a striking instance of the "power" given by the dragon (or Satan) to the beast,[2] and might be regarded as the commencement of a last period of oppression in regard to the holy city, as well as to the Christian Church. The period so begun would, probably, in the view of the writer, end about A.D. 70; and, supposing the death of Jesus to have been about A.D. 33-35, would consist of thirty-five years. As Daniel, in his construction of a "time," or καιρος, changes each individual year of Jeremiah's period into seven years, so the writer of Revelations, in order to adapt Daniel's phraseology to the case before him, may have divided the years elapsed, since the nativity, into seven decads of years, half of which will be three decads and a half, or thirty-five years. In order to complete the sacred number of seven kings (answering to the seven hills) from Augustus, under whom Rome began an impious rivalry with divine power,[3] he requires only one more short reign, after which the millennium and end of the world take place immediately. The writer's point of view places us unmistakeably at the extreme verge of earthly things, and the essence of the prophecy is the rapidity with which the few remaining events follow each other, one short intervening reign, Messiah's instant arrival, and the hurrying of Antichrist to destruction. There is absolutely no room for postponement; and orthodox interpreters, finding it impossible, with any plausibility, to substitute Papal for heathen Rome, are obliged, in order to keep the prophetic interest still in suspense, to sever the horns from the beast they belong to, to make them allies of the Lamb instead of enemies; and there being no one left for them to conquer, to make them conquerors of themselves. In spite of the precision with which the writer carefully limits the time and scene, every one now thinks himself at liberty to give to vaticinations, long ago falsified, a chance of fulfilment, by appropriating them to actual

[1] Rev. xii. 5, 6. [2] Ch. xiii. 4, 5. [3] Ch. xiii. 4. [4] Ch. xvii. 10.

circumstances. Strange, that after the frequent and notorious failures of the Jews in their attempts to define the exact time of the end of the world, their baffled prognostications should still be employed for the same foolish purpose; and that after the Almighty has repeatedly declared, "It is done," "It is finished," in the first century of the Christian era, there should be persons sufficiently bold and visionary to make the contradictory assertion, that the trumpets and vials are still pouring forth their mischievous influences in the nineteenth.

9. *The Millennium.*

But if Nero never returned, and from the very falsification of the prophecy in its original meaning, the evangelical theologian is now, as Lücke pretends, the better qualified to develope its spiritual significancy, to understand the Apostle's words better than he could himself,[1] and to obtain from them a satisfactory insight into the mysteries of God's kingdom, the same premises may justify the rational theologian in denying the existence of any mystery at all, and in asserting the "Revelations" to be little more than a reflex of Judæo-Christian ideas and current eschatological conceptions. The tone and feeling of the book, its imagery and language, are all unmistakeable. Its Christianity may be "a new song,"[2] but the rhythm is Jewish;[3] heaven is a new Jerusalem, the elect belong exclusively to the tribes, and instead of the Christian liberality and charity of the Gospel ascribed to John,[4] we find all the petty partiality and bitter vindictiveness of the Old Testament.[5] Almost all the apocalyptic imagery may be traced either in the Old Testament or other Jewish writings, such as the Targums and New Testament Apocrypha, to familiar types and ideas, which the writer has skilfully adapted and combined; thus the beast representing the worldly power of Rome is a compound of the four beasts or monarchies of Daniel, carrying, in happy correspondence with the seven-hilled city, their aggregate amount of heads. The Millennium, or reign of Christ with the saints on earth, is a peculiar limitation of the Old Messianic theory. It is the materialised felicity of the just viewed

[1] See p. 313.
[2] Ch. xiv. 3.
[3] Ch. ii. 9; iii. 9, 12, &c.
[4] John iii. 16; xii. 47.
[5] Ch. vi. 10; xi. 12; xviii. 6; xix. 13, 15; compare Ps. liv. 7; xcii. 11, &c.

as a cosmical Sabbath,[1] and made terminable in order to leave room for ulterior eschatological proceedings. To the original theory contemplating the renewed reign of David under a victorious successor there had been superadded a resurrection in favour of those faithful Jews who died too soon to witness the event. This partial resurrection afterwards required to be either expanded or repeated; and it then became a question whether there should be two resurrections, or only one. If the idea of the theocracy was to be realised in the original sense of an earthly kingdom, it was necessary that there should be two, the first including only the just, or "saints of the Most High," who would reign on earth a thousand years before the general resurrection. St. Paul[2] seems to leave no room for such an interval, since he devotes the whole period from the coming of Christ down to the "τελος," or final establishment of God's empire, to a continued struggle between good and evil; whereas, in the Apocalypse, the Millennium forms a period of repose between two resurrections and two great battles between Christ and Antichrist. The two notions, that of a palpable Messianic restoration and that of an eternal immortality, were to be reconciled; and it was necessary to determine whether the "days of Messiah"[3] belonged to the "αιων ὁντος," or "αιων μελλων," to this world or the next. The reconcilement might take place either by union or succession; by throwing the Messianic period into futurity, in which case Messiah's coming would only be the instant of entering on a new world; or it would have a prolonged duration interposed between the present and future. Its duration was variously calculated;[4] but the prevailing opinion was an inference from the assumed great cosmical period of 7000 years. This inference, which has already been cited from Irenæus,[5] is explained at length in the Epistle of Barnabas.[6] "Consider, my children, what that signifies,' he finished them in six days.' The meaning is this, that in 6000 years, God will bring all things to an end. For with him one day is a thousand years, as He says Himself,[7] 'behold to-day is as a thousand years.' Therefore, children, in six days, that is, six thousand years, shall all things be accomplished.

[1] "Quotquot enim diebus hic factus est mundus, tot et millenis annis consummatur."—Irenæ, bk. v. ch. xxviii.
[2] 1 Cor. xv. 23. [3] Luke xvii. 22.
[4] See Gfrörer, Urchristenthum, ii. p. 206, seq.; Lücke, Offenbarung, p. 311.
[5] Bk. v. 28. [6] Ch. xv. [7] Psalm xc. 4.

And what is that He saith, 'and rested the seventh day?' He means that when the Son shall come to abolish the season of the wicked one and judge the ungodly, he will gloriously rest on the seventh day."[1]

Orthodox interpreters are unwilling to admit early Christianity to have been generally Chiliastic. Cerinthus and Papias were Chiliasts; but then, it is said, they were heretics, and being at variance with present orthodoxy, cannot have ever held apostolical truth. Lücke seems to regard the fire and brimstone of the Apocalypse, the gorging of the fowls with human flesh,[2] the precious stones of the heavenly city, and the monthly fructification of the tree of life, of which the nations are liberally allowed to use the leaves,[3] as matters of high spiritual import, entirely subservient to the moral purpose which he considers the writer to have discreetly kept in view throughout. That second coming which to common apprehension bears the semblance of an external event, heralded with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, a revelation in flaming fire,[4] like the lightning streaming from one end of heaven to the other, is reduced by the spiritualising interpretation to the silent operation of the spirit, gradually but continuously expanding its healing influences to the end of time.[5] Christ's millennarian reign on earth is no vulgar sovereignty intrenched in Jerusalem,[6] but the sabbath of the soul, the moral peace and joy which Christ even in this world assures to his elect. But if this be all meant by the apocalyptic descriptions, why refuse the same latitude of figurative expression to Papias and Cerinthus, or else candidly admit that Chiliasm in its common acceptation was a general doctrine of the faith professed by the early Christian teachers, not only those already mentioned, but by Justin, Melito, Irenæus, and Tertullian? Justin, who makes the Millennium an essential element of correct orthodoxy,[7] understands it in the gross sense of eating and drinking with the Messiah,[8] and Irenæus and Tertullian countenance upon this subject the most fantastic notions. Tradition makes Jesus himself a Chiliast; for we are told by Irenæus that the Ephesian presbyters who had seen the Apostle John, heard him relate how the Lord taught about those days, saying: "Behold, the days are at

[1] See also Lactantius, Inst. vii. 14. [2] Ch. xix. 21. [3] Ch. xxii. 2.
[4] 2 Thess. i. 8. [5] Lücke, Offenbarung, p. 313. [6] Rev. xx. 9.
[7] Tryph. lxxx. [8] Ib. ch. li.

hand when there shall be vines having each three thousand bunches." This only repeats the Rabbinical idea of Paradise, in which each grape would be a load for a waggon, and the trees fructify daily.[1] Such notions, rightly designated by Jerome as Jewish, were general, yet not universal. We know from Justin, that many disowned them even in his time, and they were discountenanced by the church, which found its stability endangered by the disquieting idea of the speedy termination of the world. Moreover, the belief in a literal fulfilment of the apocalyptic eschatology lost ground, in consequence of the allegorising interpretations of the Gnostics introduced into church theology by Origen; some disputed the genuineness of the book; others assigned in the above-mentioned way a spiritual meaning to its predictions, as that the first resurrection was the awakening of the spirit by the gospel, or that Christ's second coming was, *ipso facto*, verified by his spiritual presence in the consciences of sinners. The church asserted its own reign to be the actual accomplishment of the Millennium, and that the saints were enjoying already the society of Christ in his kingdom.[2] Yet the literal construction was never formally abandoned; and in consequence of an opinion that the Millennium actually began with the appearance or death of Christ, a dread of the approaching end, suggested in part by the horrible depravity of the times, was generally spread at the beginning of the 11th century throughout Christendom.[3]

10. *Eventual Predominance of Judaism.*

St. Paul's unpopularity was a natural consequence of the illiberal and unapprehensive character of those whose Christianity, far from implying an abandonment of Judaism, was only a stricter and more enthusiastic adherence to it.[4] In all outward respects, except the acknowledgment of Jesus as Messiah, his followers were like other Jews, anxiously keeping the observances which St. Paul renounced as "beggarly elements," frequenting the synagogue and temple, and attending to clean meats, circumcision, and Sabbaths. Comparing the

[1] Gfrörer, Urchrist. ii. 243, 247, 257.
[2] August. de Civ. xx. 9.
[3] Gieseler, ii. p. 268.
[4] Rev. ii. 9; iii. 9.

immediate results of Christianity with its real objects and tendencies, we are forced to conclude that the immediate associates and followers of Jesus were incapable of properly comprehending either his character or his teaching. And indeed the same feeling, differently instructed and guided, might produce either the ascetical idealism of the early Christians or the political fanaticism of the Jews; for although, in the point of its closest approximation to Judaism, *i. e.* the idea of a Messiah, Christianity distinctly contradicted Jewish instincts by the provisional adoption of a crucified one, the breach appears to have closed almost as soon as it was made by the transference to the "second coming" of what was uncompleted in the first. "The Jews," says an early Christian writer,[1] "erred respecting the Lord's first coming; this is really the only difference between us and them; for that a Messiah is to come, they believe as well as we; the only point of disagreement is as to his having already appeared in humble guise." In the Acts, Christianity is supposed to be in the minority, and is therefore called a Jewish "heresy;" but most of the early Christian writers retort the imputation of heresy upon other Jewish sects, and treat their own way of thinking as the only true Judaism.[2]

St. Paul, too, declares Christianity to be the true inheritance of Abraham, though he does so in a peculiar sense; claiming the inheritance of the "believing" as contrasted with the circumcised Abraham, and thus transferring it to a wider sphere by considering its vital essence to be the promise given before the law, and to which the latter had only a subservient and temporary relation. The religion of the Old Testament, which had always been a system of expectancy, was thus absorbed by a more comprehensive one, and proved in its original provisions to have anticipated its own overthrow; indeed, the more carefully it was studied, the more it seemed to discountenance triviality, and to blend with the universal dictates of nature and conscience. But this comprehensive estimate, though undoubtedly latent in Christian feeling, was slowly apprehended, and by many never attained. The liberal

[1] Recognitiones, i. 43 and 50.

[2] Hegesippus, for example, speaks of the Essenes, Pharisees, Sadducees, &c. as distinct from the genuine "tribe of Judah which believed Christ;" (Euseb. H. E. iv. 22, with the note of Valesius). Comp. Rom. i. 3; ii. 29; Rev. ii. 9; James i. 1; and Hebrews, passim.

tendencies which coexisted with the original community in Jerusalem, appear to cease from the time when the Hellenists were persecuted and dispersed,[1] after which we hear of the Jerusalem Christians only as strict Judaists, "zealous of the law."[2] Their belief in a resurrection is said to have made them disliked by the Sadducees, but the Pharisees befriended them; and if, as alleged, the authorities really wished to silence them, the attempt was soon abandoned. The reactionary perversity of the Galatian Christians, the exclusive jealousy deprecated by St. Paul among the Roman, the childish attachment to Jewish observances of meats, drinks, &c., long combated by Christian writers, such as "Hebrews," Barnabas, and Justin, abundantly prove that the religion was still cramped by the forms and habits of thought which determined its earliest expression. The true spiritualism of Christian sentiment was ridiculously travestied by the fanatical Corinthians, and the prolific idea of holiness, purity, and imitation of divine perfection,[3] was perverted, even by St. Paul,[4] into needless asceticism.[5] A general notion of early Christian practice may be formed from the tradition related by Hegesippus about James "the Just,"[6] which must, of course, have been in general correspondence with the spirit of the times. The "Lord's brother" and immediate successor as head of the church at Jerusalem is described as a Jewish Nazarite, holy from the womb, eating no animal food, and drinking no wine or strong drink. "No razor came upon his head, neither did he anoint himself with oil, or use a bath." "He alone might enter the holy place; he wore no woollen, only linen garments;" he also, according to Epiphanius, wore the sacerdotal mitre, and was chaste unto death.[7] In this

[1] Acts viii. [2] Acts xxi. 20.

[3] 1 Pet. i. 15; 2 Pet. iii. [4] Rom. viii. 13; 1 Cor. vii.; Gal. v. 24.

[5] See Athenagoras, Leg. xxxv.: "το εν παρθενιᾳ μεινai μαλλον παριστησι τῳ Θεῳ."

[6] Euseb. H. E. ii. 23. "Justice," "operari justitiam," or "δικαιοσυνη," are the conventional names for early Christianity. See 1 John ii. 29. Christ is called the "Just One." Lactantius says, "Petrus convertit multos ad justitiam"—"Nero prosilivit ad excidendum templum et justitiam," &c.

[7] The object of the tradition is to show, that as Christianity was the true Judaism, so James was the true High Priest. The Jewish priest wore linen alone in the temple, but might wear woollen in other places; not so James, who might at all times enter the holy of holies, whereas in general it was entered only once a year. It proceeds to relate the martyrdom of James, who, when the Scribes and Pharisees applied to him, as a man highly esteemed by the Jews, to disabuse them of their increasing infatuation about Jesus, boldly proclaimed before them all the specifically

account, and in several early writers, as Hermas, the Homilies, and the Epistle to James, there is much reminding us of the sect of the Essenes, who, among other customs, never changed their shoes or dress until ragged or worn out, avoided the use of oil as a defilement, and despised riches and pleasure, esteeming continence above all virtues. Dwelling in the very solitudes where Christianity first announced the beatitude of the poor, they claimed, like the Christians, to be the true Jews; and it is curious that this claim, seemingly clashing with their own, should have been conceded by Christian writers,[1] confirming, apparently, the indications contained in the history of the Baptist, and elsewhere, of the wide-spread influence of those ascetics.

It might perhaps be expected that the Gentile converts would better appreciate the views of St. Paul, and faithfully second his lofty spiritualism. It appears, however, that his proposals were unsuited to their wants, and obscured the very boon which, as "lawless" Gentiles, they most needed.[2] They stood in need of that clear demarcation between right and wrong which an irregular life and a multifarious external symbolism had almost obliterated; they could not compass "righteousness" without a rule for ascertaining it; and indeed St. Paul, whose abrogation of law was not so much the object as the preliminary postulate of his teaching, had himself in some measure provided for the self-evident requirement, by substituting for the superseded "letter" a free and "spiritual law,"[3] better adapted, as he thought, for Gentile wants. But then his vindication of Christianity as the true Judaism,[4] and his anxiety to insist on every essential requirement of the law, showed that the change which he proposed was more verbal than real;[5] at all events the form of its expression was too

Christian tenet, that "Jesus was the Christ, and that he would come a second time in the clouds of heaven." Tradition here indicates the sole apparent distinction between Jew and Christian, *i. e.* who the coming Saviour was to be.

[1] Valesius (to Euseb. H. E. iv. 22) rightly ascribes the omission of the Essenes in the enumeration of heretical sects given by Justin and the Clementine "Recognitiones," to the favourable light in which they were viewed; and the Apostolical Constitutions explicitly state that the Essenes, "separating themselves from heresy, kept inviolate the religion of their fathers." (Bk. vi. 6.)

[2] 2 Cor. vi. 14; Gal. ii. 15.

[3] 1 Cor. vi. 9; vii. 19; Gal. v. 14; vi. 2; Rom. xiii. 8–10.

[4] Gal. vi. 16; Rom. ii. 28.

[5] He uses the word "law," as he does the word "life," in two senses, so that the "law" is abrogated, and yet still binding. Rom. iii. 31; Gal. iii. 25, &c.

mystical to be generally understood, and could not become popular. The Gentiles could not estimate conceptions which transcended their experience, and were little interested in being liberated from a bondage they had never felt; so that when told by the Jerusalem emissaries that they could not be saved without Mosaic law,[1] the ethical tendency which had been concurrent with conversion, whether taking the formal direction as in Galatia, or the ascetic and fanatical, as at Corinth, everywhere relapsed into an external legalism. In St. Paul himself all religion was summed up in an intense faith or feeling which made duty spontaneous, and seemed to enthrone Christ within his own soul; but the generality of men, in whom this feeling was undeveloped or incomplete, required an objective faith; and this the determinate rule of a modified Jew-Christianity was better able to supply. The Gentiles were but imperfectly weaned from old habits and connections; they required, as novices, the initiation of strict discipline;[2] and St. Paul, whose antinomian idealism would have overleaped, by a sudden self-abandonment to God, all the usual gradations and conditions of human amelioration, was himself obliged to find an equivalent for the instrumentality he had subverted, to recall his concessions, and to deprecate the natural consequences of the premature liberty conferred by his own system.[3] Hence it was that the Pauline churches soon became avowedly Petrinic; and that the permanent results of the Paulinic teaching were confined to the idea of catholicity, the general development of the free Christian consciousness, and an instinctive separation between morals, or the "holy" "spiritual" law, and the "beggarly elements" of ritual.

[1] Acts xv.

[2] It will be recollected, that in order to check heathen practices among the ancient Jews, it was found requisite to assume the discovery of a positive law prohibiting them. 2 Kings xxii. 8.

[3] 1 Cor. viii; Rom. iii. 31, and ch. vi.

PART III.

IDEA OF CATHOLICITY.

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1. *The Roman Church.*

SALVATION through a Messiah had been immemorially considered to be "of the Jews;" that is, a strictly Jewish privilege. To offer it to Gentiles, and, moreover, to offer it apart from Jewish obligations and qualifications, seemed to the first disciples a flagrant abuse and an astounding impiety. Hence the memorable altercation at Antioch; from which it appears that during the seventeen years elapsed since St. Paul's conversion, the older Apostles had scarcely advanced beyond their first limited ideas: they still insisted on circumcision;[1] and even after having formally abandoned to St. Paul the control of the Gentile churches, kept up a vexatious system of espionage and interference,[2] tending to subvert the liberty they had ostensibly conceded. In Galatia and Corinth a reaction took place, producing in each a peculiar phase of Judaising intolerance; in the one Mosaic formalism,—in the other, hostility to the personal claims of St. Paul. The latter confronted his Galatian adversaries with a direct contradiction, asserting the fundamental convictions of the faith against pretensions which he felt to be utterly incompatible with true Christianity.[3] To the Corinthians he justified his apostleship by appealing to his sufferings and labours, as well as to his more than usual share of divine gifts and revelations. But even were the apostolic claim and the difficulty about circumcision conceded, the two Christianities—the Jew and the Gentile—remained in principle unreconciled; and the growing preponderance of Gentile converts

[1] Acts xv. 1, agrees with Gal. v. 2–4. But Acts xv. 6, &c. and xvi. 3, 4, is utterly at variance with St. Paul's own declarations: for instance, in Gal. i. 8; ii. 5, 6, 14. See Zeller's Jahrbücher, viii. p. 436, seq.

[2] 2 Cor. xi. 13; Gal. ii. 4; iii. 1; iv. 9, 17; comp. Phil. i. 15.

[3] Gal. i. 8; v. 2.

increased the discontent and jealousy of those who considered themselves already to be God's elect by right of birth. In his Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul modifies his original position, and while maintaining justification by faith freely offered to all men, endeavours by explanation and concession to reconcile his Jewish kinsmen to more liberal views. He evidently pleads a difficult cause before an unwilling audience; nor could any doubt have existed as to the description of converts addressed, had it not been gratuitously assumed that the Christianity of the Gentile metropolis must have been Gentile, and also that this Gentile Christianity must have been Paulinic. Doubtless the Roman Church consisted partly of Gentiles; and St. Paul founds on this fact[1] his claim, as Apostle of the Gentiles, to interfere for their advantage. Both classes of converts which, since the apostolic conference at Jerusalem,[2] had been recognised as distinct—the "circumcision" and the "uncircumcision"—and, moreover, the liberal and illiberal, are addressed in the Epistle; but its arguments chiefly concern the Judaisers and the Jewish. To these is directed the advice about observing meats and Sabbaths, the elaborate apology for Christian universalism, the anxious substitution of a new theocratic theory for the old, and the conciliatory remarks, asserting, in spite of appearances, the real permanence of Jewish privilege. The second part of the Epistle would have been superfluous for Gentile converts to Paulinism, and useless for unconverted Jews; only for Jew-Christians is it relevant, although the Apostle, presuming the assent of his hearers, naturally addresses them as "Christians," leaving the less palatable part of his explanation to fall upon the unbelieving Jews. The Acts would insinuate that St. Paul, on his arrival in Rome, addressed himself to the "Jews" only; and, indeed, that the Roman Christians, whose "good report," we are told, "was known to all the world,"[3] were almost unknown, or known only by hearsay, to their Jewish brethren in that city;[4] a supposition wholly inadmissible, but hazarded by the writer in order to carry out his general design of veiling Christian disunion and St. Paul's antagonism. He employs St. Paul's own apology for Gentile conversion, but applies it unhistorically. Paul speaks of the calling of the Gentiles as a consequence of Jewish blindness and perversity; the Acts would show how the

[1] Ch. i. 13. [2] Gal. ii. 9. [3] Rom. i. 8. [4] Acts xxviii. 17.

Apostle's own experience everywhere illustrates his theory, and, in spite of his primary calling of Gentile missionary,[1] makes him everywhere address the Jews *first*,[2] in order in each instance to authorise his turning to the Gentiles. St. Paul's own plea to the Romans is different. The apology for Christian universalism is anterior and distinct from that for his actual address. He addresses the Roman Christians not because they are Jews, having, as such, a legitimate right to his first overtures; but for the contrary reason, that they are, in fact, extra-Judaical,[3] and that, whatever their peculiar bias or extraction, they are geographically, at least, Gentiles. That their Christianity, however, was mostly Judaical, is clear from the general scope of the argument; and it appears, moreover, that many of them were of those extreme Judaisers who looked on worldly authority and the principalities of this world as demoniacal,[4] and who conscientiously abstained from animal food as an unclean and unholy thing.[5] But there were also many in the Roman community more liberally minded;[6] and the object of the Apostle in writing to them appears to have been that which at the time he had most at heart—to heal the dissensions unhappily prevailing among Christians. His efforts in this direction naturally turned to Rome, which, from its varied population, its independence of Jerusalem, and its metropolitan importance, seemed to offer the best opportunity for the attempt. He pleads the cause of universalism by showing that since all men stand alike before God in regard to sin, so all are alike susceptible of favour and redemption; and that the calling of the Gentiles is a happy incident providentially resulting from the perversity of the Jews, intended not to exasperate, but to stimulate them to honourable rivalry, until the accomplishment of the gracious purpose of God in the general salvation of mankind. Under these circumstances, he deprecates Gentile presumption as much as Jewish irritation or despondency; admonishes the liberal and strong-minded convert to respect the scrupulosity of the "weak," and advises the ascetic and Sabbatarian not to judge harshly and uncharitably the liberty of his brother.[7] The chief remaining link between the

[1] Gal. i. 16. [2] Ch. ix. 20; xiii. 46. [3] Rom. i. 5 and 13.

[4] Comp. ch. xiii. 1, which maintains the contrary position that "the powers that be are ordained of God." Comp. also Luke iv. 6; Eph. vi. 12; Rev. xiii. 2, where the beast *supported by the dragon* is the Roman empire. Epiphan. Hær. xxx. 16; Clem. Hom. xv. 7; Baur's Paulus, 387.

[5] Ch. xiv. 2. [6] Ib. [7] Ch. xiv.

two great Christian denominations seems to have been the alms forwarded from time to time to Jerusalem[1] for the use of the original community in that city, who appear as legalised paupers (or "Ebionites"), living on gratuities sent to them by those[2] whom in return they perplexed and led astray by their jealousy and bigotry. St. Paul hoped to the last that their illiberal prejudices would cease, and that the supplies munificently contributed by his own churches for their wants might soften the arrogance and intolerance of their disposition.[3] His last journey to Jerusalem was undertaken, not for the purpose suggested in the Acts, of performing his religious duties as a Jew in the Temple,[4] but to make a final effort to conciliate by conveying in person the contributions of the Gentiles.[5] When these benevolent intentions were replied to by a threat of assassination and an attempt to tear him to pieces, he might have wholly despaired of accomplishing a pacification, unless he were to execute his long-cherished purpose of visiting Rome.[6] There, at least, amidst a freer interchange and circulation of ideas, he might hope to effect in part what was impossible in Palestine. But the later Pauline letters, whether conveying the Apostle's own testimony, or only the tradition about him, afford a presumption that the reception he there met with was anything but favourable: they intimate a continuance of those bitter animosities which made his life almost insupportable through the machinations of the "dogs of the circumcision," disappointing every hope of generous co-operation and sympathy.[7]

2. *Severance between Christianity and Judaism.*

The dissensions which so severely tried the patience of St. Paul, and which he so earnestly deprecates in "Romans," could

[1] Gal. ii. 10.

[2] Acts xi. 29; Rom. xv. 26, 27; 1 Cor. ix. 11, 12, 15; xvi. 3; 2 Cor. viii. 4; ix. 1, &c.; xi. 12, 20.

[3] 2 Cor. xi. 12, 13.

[4] Acts xviii. 21; xx. 16; xxiv. 11.

[5] 1 Cor. xvi. 4: a motive which, though evidently known to the writer of Acts (ch. xxiv. 17), he as far as possible suppresses, substituting another more in harmony with his own representation of the Apostle's conduct.

[6] Rom. i. 13.

[7] Phil. i. 15; ii. 20, 21; iii. 2; 2 Tim. iv. 16. The two last chapters of Romans have been shown to be interpolated; they, however, by their apologetic tone, make it probable that the Epistle, or the sentiments contained in it, had not been well received.

only gradually subside. The two last chapters of the Epistle are admitted to be a conciliatory appendix, added in order to pacify animosities still prevalent, by showing how the unpopular Apostle carefully confined his labours to the highways and hedges of heathenism, and by representing him in his character of alms-collector for the benefit of the "poor saints"[1] in Jerusalem. It was, however, inevitable that the increase of conversions should at length break down the barriers of prejudice, and that the privileges once so zealously defended against Gentile intrusion by Judaists should become common Christian property. St. Paul himself, when protesting (though certainly in ambiguous terms) against the imputation of being a destroyer of "the law,"[2] seemed himself to have pointed out a basis of compromise and pacification. He renounced the law in the old contracted sense, but restored it in a higher one. By means of this alteration, Jew-Christians were brought to renounce national prejudice and obsolete ritual, while Gentiles, unapt to comprehend the Pauline metaphysical refinements, adopted a Christianity consisting in moral amelioration and obedience to the essentials of the law, rather than in passive justification and mystical atonement. The prevalent Christian doctrine thus became an improved modification of the Mosaical, and the Pauline controversy was forgotten in a partial adoption of its inferences. It was not so much a compromise attained by the deliberate arrangement and mutual concessions of two hostile parties, as the internal self-development of Christian feeling, spontaneously extruding the inapposite, and assimilating and incorporating every extant idea in harmony with its instincts. This was the unconscious, but all-controlling aim of the post-apostolic writers. It seemed before all things necessary that the new faith should be distinctly appreciated in its magnitude and meaning, and guarded against misapprehension and indifference. The Epistle to the Hebrews, whatever the place or date of its composition,[3] is an early effort to rouse the Jew-Christian mind to a comprehension of the full import of its peculiar calling. Its object is to assert the paramount superiority of Christian salvation against those who, from indifference or disappointed hope,

[1] If the Acts (ii. 42, 44, 45; iv. 32, 34) correctly represents the economy of the early Christians, their poverty might easily be accounted for.

[2] Rom. iii. 31; vi. 14; vii. 12.

[3] Schwegler and others suppose it to be Asia Minor. (Th. Z. ii. 295.) Some, referring to xiii. 20, derive it from Rome.

were ready to apostatise to Judaism,[1] or from dulness and superficiality were unable to rise from the Old Testament rudiments to a "higher gnosis"[2] or loftier ideas—to see how carnal ordinances of meats and drinks had been superseded by the new Christian covenant, with its heavenly priesthood, its spiritual atonement, and its law written on the heart.[3] Professedly emanating from Pauline sources,[4] and conveying views which may be termed either a spiritualised Judaism, or a Judaised Paulinism, it gives the earliest distinct intimation of a split within Jew-Christianity itself, claiming (as does also the Epistle of Barnabas) for Christians alone, not only the privileges, but, in a spiritual sense, the institutions of Judaism. The first Christians, it will be recollected, were "zealots for the law,"[5] and were visibly separated only by a slight speculative difference from unconverted Jews. Though sectarian, they were not so isolated as some other sects; they were in favour with the Pharisees, and the execution of James the Just by the Sadducean High Priest, Ananus, was disapproved by the more considerate of his countrymen. The story of Peter having founded the Church of Rome means only what we learn from St. Paul's epistle, the Judaical character of early Roman Christianity; and the silence of Josephus, as well as the inaccuracy of other writers in ascribing Christian characteristics to the Jews, may have arisen from the real difficulty of seeing a distinction.[6] The early Christian bishops, both at Jerusalem and Rome, were all circumcised;[7] indeed, all Christians, we are told by Sulpicius Severus,[8] held the faith Mosaically. Even Gentile converts swelled at first the number of the Jew-Christians, and, in general, esteemed themselves secure of salvation only by adopting, to its full extent, the "εννομος πολιτεια," or bonds of legalism.[9] The practical difficulty of enforcing punctuality in this respect,

[1] Ch. x. 23, 35–38; comp. vi. 6, 11.

[2] "τελειοτης," or "πλειων γνωσις." Heb. vi. 1; 1 Clemens xli.; Phil. iii. 10.

[3] Ch. viii. [4] Ch. xiii. 23. [5] Acts xxi. 20.

[6] Suet. Claud. ch. xxv; Acts xvii. 2; Dio. Cass. Xiph. lxvii. 14. The distinctive name of Christian is said, in Acts xi. 26, to have been assumed by the early Gentile converts of Antioch; this, however, is extremely doubtful (Baur's Paulus, p. 90; Zeller's Magazine, viii. 418), and the name, which is for the first time recorded as openly assumed in the Epistles of Ignatius, had been for a long time a term of reproach. Schwegler's N. Z. ii. 166, note.

[7] Euseb. H. E. iv. 5.

[8] "Non nisi ex circumcisione habebat ecclesia sacerdotem."—"Pœnè omnes tùm Christiani Deum sub legis observatione credebant."

[9] Justin, Tryph. xlvii. 152.

combined with the general expansion of free sentiment, reduced the comparative number of the extreme Judaisers, ultimately compelling them either to quit the community, or to modify their opinions. Many chose the former alternative, and were disclaimed by their associates as heretical Ebionites[1] or Nazarenes; although their heresy consisted rather in the obstinacy of their external orthodoxy, and their refusal to move with the age; so that Jew-Christianity became heretical, not because its creed had changed, but because the general church had advanced beyond it. But the same reasons which made Christianity more accessible to Gentiles rendered it less palatable to the unconverted Jews, who now began to look on its professors in a different light; to treat them as renegades from the faith, and to curse their religion as a profane mockery in the synagogues.[2] Henceforth the Jews took an active part in persecuting Christians,[3] sending emissaries to accuse them wherever they could hope to get a hearing.[4] The feud seems to have begun on the Christian refusal to take part in the Jewish insurrection, under Barchochba, who revenged himself by a bloody persecution; subsequently to this, we find the Christians sending protests to the Emperor Hadrian, disclaiming identity with the culprits. The cotemporary Roman bishop, Xystus (A.D. 120–129), is mentioned as the first who dropped the Jewish Passover observance; and about the same time were composed a number of writings, under the form of controversial dialogues between Jew and Christian, that, for example, of Justin with Tryphon, and the "antilogy" of Papiscus and Jason, all calculated to bring home to men's minds what as yet was imperfectly understood, the essential difference between the religions, and to substitute for the dispute between Jew and Gentile Christianity the opposition of Christianity in general to unbelieving Judaism. This is the ground taken by the writer of Acts, who strives to identify the modified Christianity of his own day with that of antiquity, and to conceal the protracted discord of Christian parties, under their common enmity to the Jews, those ideal "Ιουδαιοι" of the fourth Gospel, who, as the type of hopeless perversity and blind-

[1] The word means "poor men." This epithet was afterwards turned into a contemptuous reproach by orthodox adversaries in the sense of poverty of intellect. See Euseb. H. E. iii. 27.

[2] Justin, Tryph. ch. xvi. 47, 96, 108, 117, 127. Jerome, Comment. on Isaiah, ii. ch. v., says that the chief of the Jews blaspheme to this day, anathematising in every synagogue the Christian name three times daily, under the name of "Nazarenes."

[3] Euseb. H. E. iv. 15.

[4] Justin, Tryph. ch. xvii., xlvii., and cviii.

ness, are no longer the heirs of the promise, but the children of the devil, bitterly opposed to Jesus as well as to St. Paul, and indeed to everything Christian and good.

3. *The "Shepherd" of Hermas.*

The Book of Hermas is an ancient production of the Roman Church, probably of the time of Hadrian. Written in the antique apocalyptic form, it presupposes a degenerate state of Christianity, in which primitive fervour had been chilled by the distractions of worldly interests. The writer, whose name, as well as that of Clemens, is probably only a covert claim to apostolical connection,[1] tries to revive the ancient strictness, beginning with general repentance and penance. It is unquestionable that many of the early Christians, like other rigorists claiming to be the "genuine Jews," exceeded in their ascetical practice the measure of ordinary Judaism, and that, in addition to the old observances of circumcision, Sabbaths, &c., their abstinence from animal food and wine, and self-devotion to celibacy and poverty,[2] were exactly the practices of the so-called "Ebionites." Epiphanius dates the Ebionitish *heresy* from the destruction of Jerusalem, when it is said to have been propounded by one "Ebion" among the Christian fugitives who took refuge beyond Jordan, and there joined the Essenes. But he admits that this (eponymous) heresiarch preached not only in Palestine and Asia, but in Rome; and, in fact, we find the earliest Roman Christians rejecting not only idol meats, but meat altogether as an unclean thing;[3] and not only observing new moons and Sabbaths,[4] but a diet of herbs[5] almost as spare as that attributed in an Ebionitish work[6] to its hero Peter. The severe Judaism of the early age proved incompatible with the wants of a progressive society, and, through the consequent neglect or hostility of an unsympathising church, most of its literary records have either perished entirely, or, like the memoranda of Papias and Hegesippus, survive only in a few fragments. The Book of Hermas, which is quoted as "Scripture" by Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen,

[1] Hilgenfeld, Apost. Vater, p. 161.

[2] Comp. Rev. xiv. 4; Rom. viii. 13; the traditions about the ascetic James, and the "Hebrews" addressed in the Epistle, who are generally allowed to have held the tenets of the Ebionites. Schwegler, N. Z. ii. 272.

[3] Rom. xiv. 14. [4] Ib. xiv. 5, 6. [5] Ib. ver. 2.

[6] The Clementine Homilies, xiv. 2.

probably owes its early acceptance and continued preservation[1] to its more moderate Catholic spirit, and the deference it professes for "the Church." It makes the church a continuance of the old theocracy, or kingdom of God's elect, comprehending, with the Christians of to-day, the patriarchs and prophets of old; the latter, however, requiring Christian baptism before admittance.[2] As the world was supposed to have been created for the Jews' sake,[3] so now its sole end is said to be the church.[4] This venerable institution appears at first to Hermas in the shape of an old woman (old because its spirit had decayed); afterwards it becomes cheerful and young, intimating that its vigour was renewed by a new revelation and the repentance of its members. Mention is made of its overseers (episcopi), deacons, teachers; and although the teachers are self-constituted by an inward call independently of an organised hierarchy, we observe the symptoms of the approach of one in the strifes already occurring about the "chief seats,"[5] in the avarice and usurpations of the deacons,[6] and irregular lives of the elders and leaders.[7] The great object of the book is to recall men from worldly pursuits and heathen laxity[8] to primitive Christian purity, in view of the near end of the world and completion of the edifice of the church, when there would be no more opportunity for penance or repentance. Its doctrinal character is still strongly Jewish. Monotheism and continence are the essence of Christianity; sin is "*ανομια*;" to "work righteousness" is vital religion; its meaning may be summed up in chastity and benevolence.[9] The gospel is identical with the law,[10] and its followers are the twelve tribes.[11] Every violation of a commandment is to be punished in exact proportion to the offence;[12] and here, for the first time,[13] we meet with the doctrine of superfluous merit, or works of supererogation, afterwards adopted from Judaism by the Roman Church. "*If*," says the writer, "you add any good action to what the Lord enjoined, you will receive more honour at his hands;" he who

[1] Origen mentions it as generally, but not universally, received as divinely inspired. (Opp. ii. p. 644.)
[2] Sim. ix. 16.
[3] 2 Esdr. vi. 59; 4 Esdr. vi. 59, 60; vii. 11.
[4] Vis. ii. 4.
[5] Vis. iii. 9; Sim. viii. 7; ix. 23, 31.
[6] Sim. ix. 26.
[7] Vis. iii. 9.
[8] It seems that many Christians continued to consult the heathen oracles. Mand. x. 2.
[9] Comp. James i. 27.
[10] Vis. ii. 3; Sim. v. 6.
[11] Sim. ix. 17.
[12] Sim. vi. 4; comp. Clem. Hom. xi. 10.
[13] Sim. v. 3.

marries sins not, but he will be more honoured by the Lord who remains a bachelor. A relish for savoury food is ascribed to the suggestions of the evil one, and all superfluities and luxuries are rigidly proscribed. Nothing whatever must be eaten on fast-days but bread and water, and a gratuity equal in value to the difference between this and a full meat is to be given to the poor. In short, the "Shepherd" is a curious relic of an age still claiming full enjoyment of the pneumatic "gifts" or Charismata;[1] it has a strong Ebionitish leaning, exhorting men to eschew the riches of the heathen,[2] and to consider themselves as strangers and pilgrims in the world.[3] It leaves entirely unnoticed the refinements of St. Paul; its faith consists in acceptance of the law and objective belief in God, redemption being not so much effected by the death of Christ as by the superfluous merit of his labours.

4. *Hegesippus.*

The character and fragments of Hegesippus, the earliest collector of materials for Christian history, incidentally supply curious hints respecting the prevalent ideas of his time. A convert from Judaism, but with leanings still severely Jewish, he went to Rome under the episcopate of Anicetus (about A.D. 150–160), in the course of a journey undertaken for the express purpose of ascertaining, by personal inspection, the continuity of episcopal succession and doctrinal uniformity of the churches. His Jewish predilections may be inferred from the general tenor of his preserved fragments, his eulogistic account of James, his using the Gospel of the Hebrews in the Syro-Chaldaic original, and his angry contradiction of St. Paul. Photius quotes with evident surprise a passage from his memoranda, in which, adducing Matt. xiii. 16, Hegesippus calls a well-known Pauline saying, from 1 Cor. ii. 9, "a foolish opinion, a lie against Scripture and the Lord."[4] His partiality is still more emphatically marked in an extract which, in the usual feeling of the time, indirectly identifies the Christians with the true sons of Judah. He speaks of[5] "the various opinions (heresies) prevailing among

[1] Comp. Justin's Tryph. 308, 314, 315, and Origen against Cels. vii. 337.
[2] Sim. i.
[3] Comp. 1 Pet. ii. 11.
[4] Cod. 232, p. 894, Hoschl.
[5] Eus. H. E. iv. 22.

the Circumcision, or children of Israel, *in opposition to the tribe of Judah* and the Messiah," enumerating the "Essenes, Samaritans, Pharisees and Sadducees, &c.;" so that the latter, who —the Pharisees especially—are wont to pass for the foremost representatives of Judaism, are here classed among unorthodox dissentients: the tribe of Judah alone are orthodox, being necessarily those *true* sons of Abraham to whom Hegesippus himself belongs.[1] The first Christians were accustomed to judge of a doctrine, not from any internal evidence of its truth, but from the reputation of the teacher, and especially his presumed personal connection or relationship to Jesus;[2] and it was chiefly the advantage possessed in this respect by the twelve that enabled them to oppose successfully the far higher mental claims and arguments of St. Paul. The journey of Hegesippus was occasioned by alarm at the progress of abnormal opinion; its object was to collect oral evidence as to the real import of the faith. He carried his purpose into effect by tracing the unbroken succession of the heads of the respective churches from Christ and the Apostles; presuming that doctrines so warranted must of course correctly represent the "genuine rule of the apostolical preaching." He therefore carefully noted that the seat of authority in Jerusalem continued for a long time to be held by the family connections of Jesus, who, by virtue of their descent from David, were universally admitted to be its rightful occupants. After the death of James the Lord's brother, Symeon was chosen because he was the Lord's second-cousin: "Up to this time," says Hegesippus, "the church was still virgin; it had not been corrupted by vain traditions." The Church of Corinth, too, continued in the true faith until Primus became bishop there. After this there arose, he tells us, many false Christs and false prophets, who disturbed its unity by corrupt doctrines, and gave occasion for his journey. The result is declared to have been on the whole satisfactory; he finds agreement among all the bishops with whom he converses, and in every succession and every city recognises conformity with "the Law, the Prophets, and the Lord."

[1] Comp. Justin. Tryph. ch. lxxx. p. 276, otto; James i. 1, &c.

[2] Comp. 2 Pet. i. 16, 18; and the description of James by Hegesippus, Eus. H. E. ii. 23.

5. *The Conciliatory Process; Peter and Paul.*

The language of Hegesippus shows the prevailing Christianity of the second century to have still retained many characteristics of Judaism. But its Jewish leanings were tempered with a liberal bias; and the influence of St. Paul was practically felt, although there was little sympathy with his theories. Hence the disappearance of the peculiar doctrine of justification in the later Paulinic epistles, coinciding with a sort of rational compromise between spiritualism and externality, obtained by sinking differences and avoiding abstruse refinements. The principle of law, as before observed, was retained; not, indeed, the ceremonial, but an improved ideal law truly expressing the Divine will, and therefore presumed to contain the true means of salvation. The great object of the post-apostolic writers is to develope in this way a specific Christianity, which to the certainty of a fixed rule shall unite the elevation of Christian feeling; combining with a sense of the independence, universality, and superiority of the new religion a popular expression of its meaning. Justin's Christianity, for example, is a "blameless life;"[1] its privileges belong to those making good their claim by works[2]—not works of ceremonial, but deeds of justice, temperance, benevolence; imitation, in short, of the Divine attributes or example.[3] The later New Testament writers present us with the same idealised Judaism, generally conveyed by the terms "righteousness," "purity," "light," "holiness," "truth;"[4] they especially delight in the word "αγαπη" (love), to express Christian obedience, a term more practical and emotional than "faith," more spiritual than "works;" indeed, uniting both in a genial compromise, and superadding to the idea of outward fulfilment that of the inner feeling from which obedience should proceed.[5] This purified Judaism was naturally assumed to be inherited from Peter, and was separated by a scarcely-discernible line from the more moderate forms of Ebionitism; the chief distinction being, that the latter professed to be substantially the old religion,—the former gloried in being a renewed and more perfect one. From the time when, in the destruction of

[1] Tryph. ch. xliv. [2] Apol. 1, ch. viii. [3] Apol. 1, ch. x.

[4] See especially 1 Pet. i. 14, 15; Coloss. i. 9; Ephes. iv. 17; and the 1st Ep. John, passim.

[5] James v. 20; 1 Pet. iv. 8; 1 Clement. 50.

Jerusalem, God himself appeared to have given an indubitable *de facto* proof[1] of the abrogation of Temple and law, even Jew-Christians adopted a more liberal way of thinking; they recognised in Christianity, as the universal religion, something higher than mere Judaism, placed Christ, as Prophet of "the truth," above the Old Testament Prophets,[2] and, in short, notwithstanding an intermixture of Essenic elements and much ascetic feeling, made a near approximation to the doctrine of "spiritual law" and moral atonement, leaving the personal claims of St. Paul alone undecided and disputed. There were certainly Paulinists who, forgetting Paul's own tenderness for weak consciences,[3] continued severely antinomian, refusing even to associate with Judaisers;[4] and there were also intolerant Jew-Christians who still resented Paul's insubordination at Antioch, and exacted Mosaical conformity from Gentiles. Justin, however, condemns both these extremes; and the prevailing tendency towards coalition is exemplified in the pious story calculated to throw a decent veil over the apostolic feud, suggesting that the "Cephas" rebuked at Antioch was not the Apostle Peter, but one of the seventy disciples.[5] For the same object, the Acts and the Philippians conceal the polemical attitude of Paul, exhibiting him in familiar amity with the other Apostles; and since the latter had never forfeited their precedency in general estimation as the immediate companions of Jesus, the Christian majority inscribed on their banner the associated names "Peter and Paul," considering themselves as followers, not of one Apostle, but of all.[6] The case was, however, considerably altered when the inherent antinomian tendencies of Paulinism were made more distinctly evident by the progress of the Gnostics. The extreme Ebionitish Christians immediately engaged in bitter controversy with this dangerous revival of an old adversary, and for the friendly partnership of "Peter and Paul" substituted the opprobrious antithesis of "Peter and Simon Magus."[7] Simple Paulinism made no progress; it had from the first but few partisans,[8] and no internal principle of union; so that, in general, it either relapsed into some form of Judaical Christianity, or pressed on to the extra-

[1] See Barnabas, ch. iv.
[2] Epiphan. xxx. 18.
[3] 1 Cor. viii.
[4] Justin, Tryph. ch. xlvii.; Ps. Ignatius, Magnes. 10.
[5] Euseb. H. E. i. 12.
[6] According to Paul's own advice, 1 Cor. iii. 6; comp. 1 Clem. v. 42, 44, 47.
[7] See the Clementine Homilies.
[8] Philipp. ii. 20; Coloss. iv. 11; 2 Tim. iv. 16.

Christian extravagances of Gnosticism. It was otherwise with the extreme Judaisers, whose intolerant prejudices are alluded to in "Romans;" a portion of these appear to have long continued a powerful hyper-orthodox party in the Roman Church, being, in fact, only the more consistent and decided exponents of that Petrinic element which had ever maintained the ascendancy; and thus Judaism and Paulinism were again arrayed against each other under altered aspects, while the majority may be presumed to have held a position of moderation and neutrality between them. In process of time the reactionary anti-Pauline exasperation again subsided, when the conservative influences of hieratic absolutism had succeeded in quelling the sources of internal disquietude; and when, towards the close of the second century, the rule of faith (the γραφαι)[1] had been to a certain extent fixed, and ecclesiastical unity firmly established, the pretensions so long disputed or suspended were definitively admitted, and the church, in the names of Clement and Peter, ventured to pronounce a gracious commendation on the "dear" and "blessed" brother who had so long been suspected or frowned upon, and whose Epistles were even then, from their latitudinarian tendencies, pronounced to be dangerous reading.[2]

6. *Petro-Paulinism at Rome.*

The doctrinal compromise or coalition formed under these auspices was a sort of eclecticism, adapting Paul's phraseology to the ideas of Peter, and concentrating, as far as possible, all the scattered outposts of catholic propriety. The watchword of "faith" was bluntly superadded to the essential condition of "works," the Old Testament blended with the Gospel, the Israelite absorbed in the Christian, and the Roman "Peter," whose nominal sanction was claimed for the result, might admit, from its intermediary character, of being styled a popularised Paul.[3] The determining sentiment may have been Petrinic, Paulinic accessories being admitted only on the presumption of their essential compatibility with Petrinic prin-

[1] 2 Pet. iii. 16.

[2] 2 Pet. iii. 15; 1 Clemens Cor. ch. xlvii.; Pseudo-Ignat. to Ephes. ch. xii.; Polycarp to Philipp. ch. iii.; Apost. Constit. ii. 57.

[3] The Ebionites, says Eusebius, cling pertinaciously to legalism, "as if they could not be saved by faith in Christ alone, *and a corresponding life*." H. E. iii. 27.

ciple; and the union was referred back to the Old Testament, whose patriarchs and prophets were acknowledged to be the fathers and legitimate precursors of the Christians.[1] The same God who beforetime selected the Israelites to be his people had now made the Christians inheritors of their privileges;[2] and it was upon this feeling of being God's elect and holy people, that Christian purity and morality depended.[3] The baptism of the ancient Hebrew worthies, and Christ's supposed descent to Hades in order to rescue the prediluvian sinners, curiously illustrate the relation in which the New and Old Testament economies were placed to each other. Christianity was the religion of universal salvation, including within its healing power the past as well as the present, the dead as well as the living,[4] the devil and his angels as well as mankind. Christians were supposed to be dead as to the flesh, but alive to the spirit by their baptism, as Noah was rescued from the catastrophe in which "all flesh" was destroyed by means of water;[5] but then to vindicate the equality of God's dealings, and to prove the universal applicability of Christian repentance and redemption,[6] it was necessary to show that the warnings and opportunities vouchsafed to Noah, and still held out to the heathen, had also been allowed to those who of old had died in the flesh, but might fairly claim a share in Christ's spiritual resurrection.[7] The Epistle attributed to James, but which even the credulous Eusebius allows to be spurious,[8] addresses (like other writings of its class) the general community of Christians as the "true Israelites,"[9] and in a rambling aphoristic style enforces the various items of duty, considered as fulfilment of the "free" or "perfect" law, such as continence, benevolence, prayer, &c. But with this it would unite the notion of faith, attempting to smooth the way to an alliance by conceding to this virtue the supplementary importance which

[1] Philipp. iii. 3; Barnabas xiv.; 1 Clement, xxxi.; James ii. 21.
[2] 1 Clement, chapters 29, 30, 35, 58.
[3] 1 Pet. i. 2, 15; ii. 9, 11; Hilgenfeld, Apost. Vater, pp. 65, 87.
[4] Hebrews, ch. xi.; 1 Clement, ch. xix.; Ps. Ignatius to Magnes. viii. 9; Ritter's Christ. Phil. i. 458, 459, 539; Clem. Alex. Strom. vi. 6, p. 763, Pott.; Origen de Princip. i. 6, 1; iii. 6, 5; Contr. Cels. viii. 15 and 72.
[5] "δι' ὕδατος," comp. 1 Pet. iii. 20; Hermas, Simil. ix. 16; Hebr. xi. 7.
[6] 1 Pet. i. 10, 20; 1 Clement vii.; Marcion in Irenæ, Her. i. 27, 3, comp. iv. 27, 2.
[7] 1 Pet. iv. 3, 6.
[8] Hist. Eccl. ii. 23.
[9] Ch. i. 1; ii. 21; comp. 1 Clem. iv. 30 and 31; Philipp. iii. 3.

St. Paul allowed to works. Hereupon orthodox apologists have laboriously attempted to show that James and Paul are not at variance, and that whichever virtue be placed uppermost the result is the same. But the faith of James is not the mystic reaction in the soul intended by Paul; it is an objective faith or earnest belief contrasted with fickleness, vacillation, or "double-mindedness;"[1] a belief which even "devils" may entertain;[2] whereas that of St. Paul implies in itself all the fruits of obedience, and at once makes its possessor the accepted child of God. The supposition that faith can possibly be "alone," or "dead," proves that James does not use the word in the sense of St. Paul, who could, under no circumstances, have conceded the principle of justification by works, his faith being either a living, fruitful faith, or none. In this Epistle, compared with other cotemporary writings, we possess distinct proof that even within the limits of approved Christianity at an advanced period of the church,[3] the Paulinic and Judaical tendencies were far from merged in a perfectly uniform creed.[4] The Epistle of James is controversial, expressly contradicting Paul,[5] and striving to counteract the force of the examples he quoted by giving them a different turn. It may be described as a hortatory expression of the views of "Hermas," ascetically extolling poverty, and showing other traces of Judaical sympathies. On the other hand, the First Epistle of Clemens, the Philippians, and First of Peter, have a Pauline, or "Paulo-Petrinic" character, speaking of Christianity as "justification," or "grace," conferred by God's free gift,[6] and accepted by means of faith; but then its actual possession must be secured and perfected by works (εργα δικαιοσυνης), by laborious effort after a still uncompleted salvation;[7] and, indeed, it is only the last phase of the one eternal religion partially disclosed in the Old Testament,[8] in which the boon there offered to a few is purchased by the blood of Christ for all.[9] The "Philippians" appear to have originated in the desire of the more liberal Roman Christians to claim for St. Paul himself a perfect agreement with the Old Testament

[1] Ch. i. 6, 8; 1 Pet. v. 9; comp. Hermas, Vis. i. 1; and 1 Clem. ch. xi. and xxiii.
[2] Ch. ii. 29. [3] Ch. xv. 14. [4] See 1 Clem. ch. xlvii.
[5] Comp. ii. 24, with Rom. iii. 28; Gal. ii. 16.
[6] 1 Clem. 32; Philipp. iii. 9; comp. James i. 18.
[7] Philipp. ii. 12; iii. 11, 12, 13. [8] Philip. iii. 3; 1 Pet. i. 10, 20.
[9] 1 Clem. 7; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19, following the "Hebrews."

religion as represented by Roman Petrinic syncretism, to vindicate the "justification" theory from the very obvious imputation of indolent self-complacency and quietism, and by combining the "fruits of righteousness" with faith,[1] to provide a formula in which each dissentient member of the church might find himself at home. Again, the writer who, in the first Petrinic epistle, recommends a modification of Pauline doctrine through the familiar medium of "Silvanus,"[2] pleads for the same union of "faith" with "love" or "works." His object is to reconcile freedom with Christian purity, to exhibit baptism as the pledge of universal salvation, to make Christianity coeval with the world, and to attest the Petrinic origin of the Roman Church.[3] It was in the consciousness of possessing a universal faith raised above the disputes of contending factions, and comprehending all that was generally approved in partial systems, that the Roman Christians ventured to assume the right of exhortation or "monition" (παρακλησις, or νουθεσια[4]) in regard to other churches, recommending, in several epistles, this "true grace"[5] for their adoption. Read without reference to chronological arrangement and cotemporary requirements, the New Testament writings present a most distracting dissimilarity of sentiment. We find Paul contradicting James, Matthew at issue with Luke, John's Apocalypse indirectly condemning John's Gospel; the contradiction is explained only when, referring the particular document to the time and the occasion, we recognise the point of view from which each writer disputes, incorporates, or modifies preceding opinions. The Epistles of James, Peter, Jude, and John, show how churchmen went to work when they wished to "exhort" their fellow-men, and to announce what they implicitly believed to be the truth. They published the accredited views of their day under the name of some influential Apostle or apostolically-connected man, attributing to him, with the arbitrary "spiritualism" employed in the Old Testament citation by St. Paul,[6] the Epistle

[1] Ch. i. 11; iv. 9.

[2] Ch. v. 12, *i. e.* Paul's coadjutor (2 Cor. i. 19) pressed into the service of Peter.

[3] See ch. v. 13, with commentary.

[4] Heb. xiii. 22; 1 Pet. v. and xii.; 1 Clem. vii. &c.; Euseb. Hist. Eccl. ii. 25.

[5] 1 Pet. v. 12.

[6] *e. g.* 1 Cor. ix. 9; x. 4; Gal. iv. 24. The author of the Hebrews offers a similar instance in his theory of Enoch, Melchisedek, and the old Patriarchs, in whose history he recognises his own peculiar ideas of the heavenly Jerusalem (ch. xi. 10) and a paramount universal atonement and priesthood; and is, of course, strengthened in his views by finding them thus seemingly anticipated in the Old Testament.

to the Hebrews, and the Alexandrian allegorists, ideas and language first suggested by altered circumstances, and adding every appeal suited to enhance the effect of the communication, as where Jude reminds the reader that he is the brother of James, and Peter pathetically alludes to his own approaching death.[1] Paul is often brought forward in later writings to defend some modification of his own opinions; but the names most frequently borrowed for conciliatory purposes are the more neutral inoffensive ones of Peter, Luke, and Clement. Peter, who really appears to have been of a weak and unstable mind, is an appropriate advocate of concession and compromise; although the one fact of the existence of a "Cephas," or Petrinic party, in the Corinthian church, sufficiently disproves the pretended personal accord of the two leading Apostles. A temporary irritation or misapprehension is wholly insufficient to account for the prolonged animosities alluded to in Second Corinthians. Indeed, the name of Peter has been used by tradition in two contradictory senses; and whereas in one book[2] he is brought forward as the bitter opponent of St. Paul in Rome, other writings adopt the legend of the amicable journey of the two Apostles in company to Rome, in the evident purpose of promoting an agreement between the parties corresponding to the reconciliation of the leaders. Generally speaking, "Peter" represents the moderate intra-Christian Judaism of Catholicity. The visionary revelations disowned by stanch Judaists[3] as diabolical deceptions are in the Second Peter[4] claimed for orthodox Christianity; and the Gentile mission which had at first been either wholly condemned, or viewed only as an inferior ministry, is appropriated by the great Apostolic founder of the Roman Church, which seems to have maintained a person specially qualified and appointed for the office:[5] an office said to have been filled by Clement,[6] and again, in later times, by Caius.

[1] 2 Pet. i. 14.
[2] The Clementine Homilies.
[3] The Clementina.
[4] Ch. i. 16.
[5] As "εθνων επισκοπος," Photius Cod. xlviii. p. 37, Hoeschl.
[6] Hermas says (i. 2, 4) he is desired by the vision to write two copies of it; one is to be sent to Clement and one to Grapte. Clement is to forward it to foreigners, Grapte to admonish the orphans and widows. The writer himself is to communicate with the presbyters at home.

7. *Luke's Gospel.*

The Gospel of Luke bespeaks the same feeling of what may be termed "Paulo-Petrinic" orthodoxy as the Epistle to the Philippians. It is an attempt to prove historically the essential harmony between Paul and Peter; to establish their agreement from the very words and example of Jesus; in short, to show that the prevalent Roman form of Judaical Christianity truly and faithfully represented the common original faith. In order to do this, Judaical qualifications are superadded to a Pauline basis in such a manner as to neutralise as far as possible the two tendencies, and to force them into uniformity. The word gospel, in its original meaning, was not a biography or chronicle of events, but the "glad tidings" of a Messiah, accompanied with a brief description of his Message to the world. The announcement was mainly doctrinal; and when St. Paul speaks of a gospel of his own,[1] he evidently means his peculiar views of Christianity, not a biography of Jesus, which, indeed, he expressly repudiates,[2] and for which no personal association with the living Jesus had qualified him. His gospel was the doctrine which he claims to have received, not from the ordinary sources of intelligence, but from inspiration; and the many nominal varieties of subsequent gospel forms, as well as the glaring discrepancies in corresponding citations from an ostensibly single evangelical source,[3] while illustrating the fluctuating character of Christian tradition, exemplify also the fact, that the really important gospel constituent was the doctrine, in relation to which the added circumstances were secondary and subsidiary. At a time when the idea of canonical scripture did not exist (the New Testament books being first cited as "γραφη" in the relatively late Epistles of Peter, Timothy,[4] and Clemens[5]), the churches naturally adapted their traditions or books to successive phases of opinion; thus giving ample grounds for the charge of arbitrary alteration which Celsus brought against them,[6] and which they, in their turn, brought against the scripture readings of repudiated or heretical opponents.[7] These arbitrary proceedings of the gospel writers, as explained by Baur and others, curiously exemplify the process

[1] 1 Cor. i. 17; Rom. ii. 16; Gal. i. 8. [2] Gal. i. 16; 2 Cor. v. 16.
[3] Schwegler, i. 238. [4] 1st Ep. [5] 2nd Ep.
[6] Orig. Cels. ii. 27. [7] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. vi. 20.

through which old forms were made to serve as vehicles for new ideas; and although the information to be obtained from narratives so framed as to the doctrines and acts of Jesus can only be an approximation or probability, our disappointment is lessened by the discovery of very valuable evidence of the advance of thought, as shown by the different degrees and ways in which each writer contrives to construe and combine the conflicting materials before him. Luke declares himself to stand at a distance from the sources of apostolical tradition, and to be one of "many" who had "undertaken to set in order" what had been handed down by the original ministers of "the word." This "word," or evangelical doctrine, was the representative of early Christian thought in its original undeveloped uniformity, when there was as yet no plurality of gospels, but only "the gospel." In the apostolic age, when Christ's second coming and the end of the world were expected immediately, no motive existed for attempting to perpetuate by writing the memorial of his earthly career. The earliest written expression of the tradition appears to have been that called the "Gospel of the Hebrews;" a name, however, not used till much later, when there were other gospels not exclusively Jew-Christian.[1] This gospel, under many varieties of form, seems to have been the most popular evangelical writing down to the middle of the second century,[2] when, being supplanted by more suitable compilations, it was placed among the number of disputed ("antilegomena"), afterwards of apocryphal writings, and was at last banished altogether. The type of evangelical tradition principally appealed to by Luke seems to have undergone a similar

[1] Jerome found this gospel among the Jew-Christians or Nazarenes in Peræa, and it appears to have been substantially the same as that which, under many names (such as the Gospel of Peter, of Matthew, of the Egyptians, Justin's Apostolical Memoirs, Tatian's Diatessaron, &c.), was constantly appealed to by Jew-Christian writers, by Cerinthus, Papias, Hegesippus, Justin, the Clementina, Ps. Ignatius, and even some of the canonical Epistles, that of James, for instance, and the 2nd of Peter. (Schwegler, N. Z. i. 204.) Justin, who frequently names Isaiah, Jeremiah, and even John, in reference to the Apocalypse, never cites by name our present evangelists; and Hegesippus, though writing in Greek, prefers to quote the Aramaic original of the Gospel of the Hebrews. Most of the early writers continue to appeal to "Moses and the Prophets" as the only "inspired" authority, and even, like Theophilus and Tatian, ascribe their conversion to reading them.

[2] Eusebius says, the Ebionites used this gospel alone, esteeming the others of very little value. (Hist. Eccl. iii. 27.) The Ebionites themselves gave out, that the spurious (or Pauline) gospel (Clem. Hom. ii. 17; comp. Epist. Petri ii.) was preached *first*,—alluding, probably, to the priority of St. Paul's missionary teaching; the true gospel came afterwards to refute heresy.

series of transitions. His gospel has two distinct sources—a Pauline and a Judaical one; these are not simply aggregated, but have each been modified by that conciliatory purpose to which so many of the New Testament books owe their existence. The conclusion to be formed as to its composition must depend on the relation between these two constituents, and of one of them, to the gospel used by Marcion. Marcion is related to have used a gospel in general harmony with his own opinions, to which he himself assigned no specific name as its author, but which Tertullian and other Fathers indignantly denounce as a garbled and mutilated Luke. It appears, however, in several instances, that Marcion's text was better connected than Luke's; and, moreover, that many of the missing passages supposed to have been purposely omitted by Marcion,—for example, the parable of the Prodigal Son,—favour his own way of thinking, and are such as he could have had no conceivable reason for excluding. His text began with a passage corresponding to Luke iv. 31-37, after which came verse 16; in our gospel these passages are inverted; and the inversion entails the awkward consequence, that verse 23 refers to events as past which have yet to come, and that in verse 24 Jesus complains of a rejection which has not taken place. Moreover, many of the passages said to have been omitted by Marcion have in Luke all the appearance of interpolation; and when Tertullian, whose charge of falsification, after all, amounts only to hypothetical inference,[1] himself admits that Marcion allowed many things to remain in his gospel which were opposed to his own opinions,[2] we may be disposed to think that, could he have been heard in his own defence, he might, as anticipated by the angry rhetorician, have either altogether disproved the falsification, or have easily succeeded in justifying it. Origen, for example, adduces the omission of the two last chapters of Romans in proof of the illegitimate proceedings of Marcion; but since it has been satisfactorily shown that neither these chapters, nor the similarly-ignored pastoral letters, have any real claim to be considered St. Paul's, we can only conclude that Marcion either knew them not because they were not in existence, or else purposely omitted them because he did not think them deserving insertion. The utter failure of the charge in

[1] See Baur, Canon. Evangelien, p. 422.

[2] Adv. Marc. iv. 43.

this instance might alone induce a suspicion of its being equally unfounded in others; and when all circumstances are taken into account—the incongruity, for instance, of many passages as they stand in Luke,[1] and the necessity of referring to Marcion for an explanation of unintelligible phrases[2]—it becomes extremely probable that the supposed omissions are subsequent additions, and that it is not Marcion who suppressed, but the later compiler who has interpolated. Marcion's gospel was not his exclusively; it was an ancient gospel, to which his name was attached because he had notoriously used it, and given testimony to its existence. So that we have here only an instance of the usual process by which a shorter, but in itself consistent, gospel became enlarged and adapted by new modifications to an advanced state of the Christian mind. To Irenæus and Tertullian, who lived when our present Luke was generally received as canonical, the reverse seemed to have been the case; they held the received gospel to be the original one, which had been used and wilfully falsified by a heretic;[3] charging him even with the omission of readings subsequently introduced for the express purpose of controverting his opinions.[4]

The present text of Luke, apart from passages afterwards omitted or added, agrees with the Paulinism of Marcion, whose gospel was probably only a prior condition of that which grew into the canonical one. The doctrinal gospel of the Paulinists would doubtless partake the usual tendency of similar writings to enlarge its circumference, so as in time to collect around it a congenial narrative adapted to liberally-thinking Christians; and the tradition ascribing the matured composition to Paul's companion, Luke,[5] may be understood in the same way as that deriving the Judaic gospel from Matthew, *i. e.* that he supplied the first written memoranda on which a more elaborate gospel was founded. The original Luke was throughout a

[1] As in ch. xix. 11, 12, 38, where it is at first denied that the kingdom should immediately appear; it is only to be received after travelling to a far country—*i.e.* the death of Jesus; yet the triumphant entry into Jerusalem, which Marcion omitted, still takes place.

[2] Baur, Canon. Ev. pp. 406, 410. [3] Baur, Canon. Ev. p. 424.

[4] *E.g.* the formula (Luke x. 22) much more nearly resembling Matt. xi. 27, than the text of Marcion. Also ch. viii. 20, the studied omission of the words, "who is my mother?" which Marcion had as well as Matt. xii. 48. Baur, Canon. Ev. pp. 410, 507.

[5] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. ii. 22; iii. 4; v. 8.

Pauline argument, sometimes giving Paul's peculiar precepts in his own words.[1] It announced in positive terms that Judaism ended where Christianity began, and transferred Matthew's prediction as to the permanence of the law[2] to the "words" of Jesus.[3] It proclaimed the Pauline doctrine of faith and grace, and suppressed all those passages in which Matthew would restrict the privileges of Christianity to Jews. Omitting the Jewish extraction and observances of the infancy, it exhibited Jesus suddenly commencing his extraordinary career at Capernaum, and forcing the dæmon world to bear witness to his divine character and his superior might.[4] Already he wields the plenary authority[5] assigned to him in Matthew only after his resurrection;[6] and the feats of healing simply recorded in Matthew emanate from the magical "virtue" of his person.[7] The supposed stronghold of dæmoniacal power was heathendom; and the relatively heathen provinces of Galilee and Samaria are, according to this gospel,[8] the principal theatre of the missionary activity of him who came especially to seek and save that which was lost.[9] He is said to have there appointed seventy supplementary Apostles corresponding to the supposed number of the nations of the earth, transferring to them the emphatic inauguration elsewhere reserved to the twelve, and endowing them with a power to oppose and overcome the prince of the dæmon world.[10] The writer's aim is evidently to depreciate the twelve in comparison with these missionaries to the heathen, who collectively represent the apostleship alone recognised by Marcion.[11] With this view he dwells on their dulness of apprehension,[12] their sleep and random talking,[13] their faithlessness and perversity,[14] and their inability to understand the real purpose of his mission.[15] He suppresses the elsewhere

[1] Comp. ch. x. 7, 8, with 1 Cor. ix. 7, x. 27; also ch. xxiv. 34, with 1 Cor. xv. 5; ch. xxii. 19, with 1 Cor. x. 23, 24.

[2] Ch. v. 18.

[3] See Tertullian against Marcion, iv. 33, showing that the original reading of Luke xvi. 17, was not "of the law," but "of my words."

[4] Ch. iv. 34, 41; viii. 28; x. 17, 18; xi. 22. [5] Luke x. 22.

[6] Matt. xxviii. 18. [7] Ch. v. 13, 17; vi. 19; viii. 46.

[8] Comp. ch. ix. 51; xvii. 11. [9] Ch. v. 32; xv. 4, 24, 32; ix. 56; xix. 10.

[10] Ch. x. 17, 18. This story may have been originally a Petrinic legend, devised in order to parallel Christ with Moses. See Recog. Clem. i. 40; Epistola Petri ad Jacob.; and Hom. ii. 38.

[11] The person whom the twelve forbid to act as a Christian missionary, "because he followeth not us" (ix. 49), is probably intended for St. Paul.

[12] Ch. xxiv. 16–25. [13] Ch. ix. 32, 33; xxii. 46.

[14] Ch. ix. 41. [15] Ch ix. 45, 55; xviii. 34.

so conspicuous glorification and spiritual endowment of Peter,[1] and exhibits James and John in a character more allied to the revengeful rancour of the Apocalypse[2] than to the benign spirit of Jesus.[3] He pleads for universalism by showing how Christ, dishonoured in his own country, was sent to preach everywhere,[4] and found apt listeners among Samaritans and heathens.[5] The more we compare the different gospel accounts with each other, the more we shall become convinced that the evangelists were not the simple, unsophisticated chroniclers they have sometimes been taken for, but singularly ingenious men, pleading a specific cause, and using no single expression or word without a deliberate purpose. The adoption of some traits and omission of others, the historically questionable circumstances and occasional contradictions, clearly display their argumentative purpose. The disparagement of Jewish legalism, sabbatarianism, and work-righteousness in one series of parables and incidents, the extension of divine mercy and acceptance to the lost Gentile sheep indicated in another, the repudiation of the Jewish theories of temporal retribution and an external eschatology,[6] the omission in the parable of the feast of the stipulated marriage garment of Jewish legalism,[7] show how Luke endeavoured to confer on the spiritualism and comprehensiveness of Christianity as remodelled by St. Paul the anticipated sanction of its Founder.

But the present gospel is not the original Luke. The Pauline gospel has passed through the hands of a compiler whose object, clearly distinguishable from that of the original, is to qualify party asperities, to restore the balance of impartiality by Judaical concessions, and thereby to adapt the narrative to catholic wants. By adding the account of the infancy, he shows that the Redeemer of the world was also, by every technical qualification, the Jewish Messiah; and by inserting the triumphal entry[8] into Jerusalem, immediately con-

[1] Luke ix. 22; comp. xxii. 31, 32. Ch. xxii. 28, 30, was not in the original Luke.

[2] Ch. ix. 54. The writer, indeed, seems to have had the Apocalypse in view, and to have intentionally transferred to the seventy the honours there exclusively given to the twelve. Comp. Luke x. 20, with Rev. xxi. 14.

[3] The Epistle of Barnabas (ch. v.) shows that many of the early Christians thought disparagingly of the older Apostles, describing them as selected on account of their having been pre-eminent sinners.

[4] Ch. iv. 43; comp. xiii. 33.

[5] Ch. viii. 35; x. 33; xvii. 16.

[6] Luke xiii. 2; xvii. 20, 21; xix. 11.

[7] Matt. xxii. 11.

[8] In narrating the public entry into Jerusalem, Luke quietly corrects the inaccu-

fers upon him the "kingdom" which just before he seemed to have provisionally disclaimed.[1] Matthew, while allowing the fact of the entry of Gentiles into the Messianic kingdom, asserts their irruption to have been abnormal and violent; the later compiler of "Luke" accepts the fact as legitimate,[2] but takes the opportunity of qualifying his admission by altering the reading[3] into the seemingly irrelevant dictum as to the perpetuity of Jewish "law," as if anxious to make amends for his liberality by a corresponding concession the other way. He adapts the genealogy to satisfy both the universalistic and Judæo-theocratic theories; to prove, in accordance with the general Paulinism of the book, how the Christ descended from David and Abraham was *also* the appropriate Redeemer of mankind as son of Adam and of God. He alters passages seeming to favour Marcion's dualism and docetism,[4] and omits certain anti-Judaical expressions which were unnecessarily harsh and offensive.[5] He points out that the calling of the Gentiles, clearly authorised by Scripture precedent,[6] was no wrong to the Jews, who, by "looking backwards" or "making excuses," had wronged themselves, but whose privileges, like those of the elder son in the parable,[7] were really the same as before, unimpaired by the rescue of those unhappy Gentiles who "perished with hunger," and were as lost and dead.[8] And though it might be imprudent to pour the new wine of Pauline doctrine into the old bottles of Judaism, he nevertheless admits it to be impossible to expect that those accustomed to the old wine should suddenly abandon it for the new.[9] The introductory verses explain the compiler's object to have been threefold—consecutive arrangement, and fulness and accuracy of information. He had before him the labours of many[10] previous writers, and endeavoured, by their aid, to make the

racy of Matthew, who, anxious only about the literal fulfilment of prophecy, seems to make Christ ride on two donkeys. Matt. xxi. 7, and Luke xix. 30.

[1] Ch. xix. 11. In this parable, the "kingdom" is evidently the distant object of the "far journey;" *i.e.* the death of Jesus.

[2] Ch. xvi. 16. [3] "του νομου" for "των λογων μου."

[4] Omits, *e.g.* in ch. viii. 20, the words occurring Matt. xii. 46, which were considered docetic, or favourable to the notion of a visionary Christ; also alters, as Matthew also does, the ancient reading, "no one *ever knew* the Father except the Son" (x, 22, Schwegler's Nachapostische Zeitalter), into "no one knoweth," &c.

[5] Thus Luke xx. 16, compared with Matt. xxi. 43; Luke xiii. 29, compared with Matt. viii. 12.

[6] Ch. iv. 25, seq. [7] Ch. xv. 31. [8] Comp. Rom. vi. 13; xi. 15.

[9] Ch. v. 39. [10] πολλοι.

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narrative of the apostolic age as complete, and also as safe and satisfactory (ασφαλεια), to all parties as possible. His position is not that of pleader on the Pauline side, but rather of an impartial arbitrator, striving to combine and generalise views essentially inconsistent, which could only through mutual concession obtain a decent semblance of uniformity; a condition of the literary structure of the gospels which, while illustrating the extreme futility of attempting to "harmonise" them, as it is called, or to reduce them to exact historical and chronological order, makes amends for our disappointment in this respect by exhibiting in the peculiar combinations adopted by each writer a different grade in the scale of approach to the eventual orthodox standard.

8. *The Acts.*

Of those passages in Luke's gospel which announce, as if prophetically, the universalism of Christianity, its rejection by the Jews, and its consequent extension to Samaritans and Gentiles, the Acts furnish a *quasi*-historical illustration. To the character of a history of early Christianity the book has no pretension. No particulars are disclosed of its external or internal relations, of its first president the rigid disciplinarian James,[1] the labours of the Apostles in the East, or the state of the churches of Asia or Rome. Only of the two great party leaders, Peter and Paul, is there a prominent, though still a scanty[2] and garbled mention; and it is clear that the writer's object is not history, but rather the practical aim of promoting Christian unity by an ideal reconciliation and equalisation of the elements of strife; by confounding the Jew-Christian opposition to a liberal Christianity with the Jewish opponents of all Christianity; by making Peter sanction acts of Paul, while Paul plays the part of Peter; by attributing, in short, to a bygone age and to the leaders of the two parties that friendly understanding and unanimity which was still a desideratum and an expectancy. It is impossible to consider as historical a narrative which, to serve a transparent purpose, scruples not to

[1] James, in direct opposition to more reliable authority, is here represented as the advocate and patron of liberalism.

[2] For instance, we look in vain for a satisfactory commentary on Paul's own intimations in 2 Cor. xi. 24.

violate all the best ascertained historical data; which perverts the well-known characteristics of historical personages; which teems with the mythical and miraculous; which contradicts St. Paul, and contradicts itself.[1] According to the Acts, Paul is a strict observer of the law, observing the instructions of James. He worships assiduously in the Temple, enforces circumcision,[2] and practises the ascetic austerity of Judaism. How unlike all this to the historical Paul, the uncompromising foe to unworthy concession,[3] the great enemy of Jewish prejudice and abrogator of Jewish law, who denounces circumcision as unchristian, and condemns the dissembling Peter for the very conduct here imputed to himself! We are in the dilemma of supposing either that Paul was a time-server who knowingly betrayed his own principles, or that the Acts have misrepresented him. How can the subordinate part played by Paul in the Acts and the evident effort to make him appear as the mere delegate of the older Apostles, be reconciled with his own independent language and proud disclaimer of obligation or connection with them?[5] Or how are we to believe that Peter, if he was really the first to confer baptism on Gentiles with the approval of the church, should at a much later time have exhibited an unmanly fear of running counter to prejudices supposed to have been already abandoned?[6] Doubtless the writer's object is to plead for Christian universalism. But he does not argue as Paul would have argued, that salvation, being God's free grace or gift, could not be the monopoly of any one nation; the plea is adjusted so as, while conceding the original validity of the Jewish claims, to dispute only the actual possibility of insisting on them; halting midway between Jewish jealousy and Pauline liberality, and admitting the former as theoretically justifiable, while defending the latter in practice. The Jews themselves, he says, have inadvertently waived their privilege, and the Gentiles must be permitted to enjoy their crumbs and leavings.[7] Paul, therefore, is not exclusively the Apostle to the Gentiles; he is carefully shown to have addressed the Jews first,[8] and only afterwards to have transferred the rejected benefit to Gen-

[1] Comp. ch. ix. 7, with ch. xxii. 9; ch. ix. 19, with Gal. i. 16, 17; ch. ix. 28. with ch. xxii. 18.

[2] Ch. xvi. 3. [3] Gal. ii. 5. [4] Gal. v. 2. [5] Gal. ii.

[6] Gal. ii. 12; Acts xv. 7.

[7] Comp. Rom. xv. 9. The two last chapters of the Romans adopt the tone, not of Paul, but of the Acts, and are evidently not genuine.

[8] Ch. ix. 15, 20; xxviii. 17.

tiles.[1] Besides, argues impliedly the writer, he introduced no novelty; he did only what Peter had already done,[2] and what the church had sanctioned. His apostolic authority, too, is scarcely less than Peter's own; he works a miracle for every miracle of Peter's;[3] confers as fully the gift of the Holy Ghost; performs by means of his handkerchief as much as Peter by his shadow;[4] parallels the resuscitation of Tabitha by that of Eutychus; in short, both have all the outward semblance of divinity;[5] both have the same legitimate authorisation;[6] and the visionary evidence on which the much-disputed apostleship of Paul depended was no unworthy hallucination, no deception of the devil,[7] but the very same which guided Peter in one of the most important crises of his career.[8] Paul is no "deceiver," no "*ανθρωπος ανομος*;" he is guiltless of any infringement of Jewish propriety. On the contrary, it is Peter who baptizes a Gentile, who deprecates circumcision,[9] who pleads for justification by faith.[10] Nowhere does Paul declare in plain terms his peculiar view as to the only way in which men could be saved. On the contrary, he preaches the doctrine of Peter, showing from "the law and the prophets that Jesus was Christ," and exhorting to works meet for repentance."[11] At Antioch indeed,[12] and at Ephesus,[13] he alludes to his theory of justification, but only in a cursory way, and in terms not more explicitly antinomian than those employed by Peter.[14] Paul is the great inculcator of the practical virtues; he preaches justice, temperance, almsgiving; dwells on his Jewish origin and Pharisaic education; extols on every occasion the law and the prophets; and although innocent of any infraction of law, whether Jewish or Roman,[15] is persecuted forsooth for preaching repentance and good works;[16] although as to this the writer

[1] Ch. xiii. 46; xviii. 5; xxii. 18, 21; xxviii. 28. So Mark, who usually omits the particularism of Matthew (x. 5, 6), changes Jewish exclusive privilege into priority. Mark vii. 27; Matt. xv. 26.

[2] "A long time before." Ch. xv. 7; comp. i. 8.

[3] Comp. the similar narratives, iii. 2, with xiv. 8.

[4] Ch. v. 15; comp. xix. 12.

[5] Ch. x. 26; xiv. 15; xxviii. 7.

[6] Ch. x. 41; xxvi. 16.

[7] As suggested in the Clementina.

[8] Ch. x. 11.

[9] Ch. xv. 10.

[10] Ch. iii. 16; x. 43; xv. 9.

[11] Ch. xvii. 3; xxvi. 20.

[12] Ch. xiii. 38, 39.

[13] Ch. xx. 21, 24.

[14] Comp. ii. 38; iii. 19, 26; v. 31; x. 43; xv. 9, 10, 11. In the latter passage Peter rests salvation on faith and grace, declaring the law to be an intolerable burden; while Paul's justification by faith does not replace the law (xiii. 39), but is superadded to it.

[15] Ch. xxv. 8.

[16] Ch. xxiv. 14, 16, 17, 18; xxvi. 20, 21.

himself furnishes data for his own confutation.[1] The book concludes with a story which, while betraying an utter disregard of historical accuracy, emphatically manifests its purpose; for if it be impossible to conceive that St. Paul could have so unblushingly asserted an evident untruth,[2] or that the Roman-Jews, whether identical with the Christian believers or not, could have been so completely ignorant as is pretended of the meaning of Christianity and of the labours of Paul, we see only the more clearly how necessary it was, in the view of the writer, to seize every possible occasion of proving, both from prophecy and fact, that the original Jew-Christian theory had been unavoidably, and therefore allowably extended; and we may infer that, at the time of its composition, the apostolic authority and doctrine of Paul, which required so elaborate an apology, were not generally accepted.[3]

9. *The Clementine Literature.*

Many conciliatory Petrinic writings bear the name of Clemens, to whom, in tradition, Peter is said to have committed the care of the Roman Church. A Gentile by birth, but a disciple of Peter, he is pointed out by "Hermas"[4] as the most appropriate herald of Petrine principles to the Gentiles. But the so-called Clementine writings vary considerably in their import, and a flexibility (corresponding to different phases of church opinion) may be traced in them, ranging from an advanced Ebionitism to that Catholicised Paulinism which entitles the Epistle to the Philippians[5] to claim an originally Petrine name for a Pauline "fellow labourer." The same authority appealed to by the "Homilies" and "Apostolical Constitutions," representing the strict Ebionitish party within the church of the second century who denied St. Paul, is also claimed for the moderate Paulinism of the first Clementine Epistle; and an early tradition referring the authorship of the "Hebrews," and also of the Acts, to Clemens, exemplifies how this name became habitually associated with literary efforts

[1] Ch. xxi. 21; xxii. 22. [2] Ch. xxviii. 17.

[3] See a series of articles by Zeller in the 8th, 9th, and 10th vols. of the Tubingen Theol. Jahrbücher, proving incontestably the unhistorical character of the Acts, and that the real Paul was entirely different from the Paul there represented.

[4] Vis. ii. 4. [5] Ch. iv. 3.

made to build up Catholic unity out of the conflicting elements of the extreme theologies. It denotes primarily the authoritative claims of the Petrinic side; but while the tradition alluded to in Hermas[1] and generally adopted in Jew-Christian literature, makes Clemens the disciple and immediate successor of Peter, Paulo-Petrinic orthodoxy, without disputing the Petrine connection, claims its share in the venerated champion of moderation by making him the associate of Paul.[2]

It seems to have been in the last-mentioned way that the monitory epistle addressed by Rome to the Corinthians acquired its reputation of being Clemens'. It propounds justification by faith as the original religion and true source of salvation; but it also insists on the realisation of faith in action; shows that Abraham and Rahab were saved, not by faith alone, but by "obedience and hospitality" also; and that not only Mosaic righteousness but Mosaic ritual retain, in a more literal and practical sense than that of "Hebrews" and 1 Peter,[3] their validity for Christians. In the "Homilies" a great change seems to have taken place. St. Paul is no longer, as in the epistle,[4] the "blessed Apostle;" he is not even an Apostle at all. The cause of orthodoxy is here more rigorously Jewish; the essence of religion is belief in one God and observance of his law; and Christ being supposed to have merely published to the world what had been already disclosed to the wise and good among the Jews, salvation or acceptance with God is equally secured by adherence to either the Mosaic or the Christian system. True religion is essentially practical; Christianity is legal fulfilment; man is a free agent; his sin is voluntary

[1] Comp. Tertullian. Præs. Hæret. ch. xxxii.

[2] Phil. iv. 3 and 32. The latter passage probably refers to Clemens, and, indeed, to the same Clemens as the one alluded to in the third verse, although the latter should have been at Philippi. A relation of Domitian, named Clement, was, it seems, put to death for embracing Judæo-Christianity. (Suet. Dom. ch. xv., and Xiphilin. there quoted.) In Hermas his name appears as that of a subordinate functionary; but eventually he became an apostolical man, the typical bishop or episcopal hero of the Roman Church; although Epiphanius and Eusebius admit that he did not exercise the office until the time of Domitian, and are, of course, at a loss to account for his long neglect of duty. Even at this latter date, however, no proper bishops existed; but when the idea of episcopal succession became established, the Petrinic and Pauline traditions, each giving a different order of succession, were brought into forced connection, Clemens was placed fourth from Peter: yet his apostolical character was pertinaciously insisted on; his imperial relationship was thrown back to Tiberius (Clem. Hom. iv. 7); he was said to have been a disciple of Paul as well as of Peter, and at last became an apostle himself. (Clem. Alex. Str. iv. 17, § 107.)

[3] Ch. ii. 5.

[4] Ch. v. and xlvii.

error, not the inevitable result of a corrupt nature;[1] and there is nothing in his moral condition disqualifying him from an adequate performance of his duty. But though generally polemical in tone, and vindicating Jew-Christianity in its most improved speculative form against the speculations of the Paulinists, the writer makes many liberal concessions. Less, perhaps, in what he says, than in what he suppresses, he shows a disposition to abandon the extreme austerities of Judaism. Though deprecating sensual indulgence, he does not forbid the use of animal food or wine, is silent as to circumcision, and even recommends marriage as preventative of a greater evil. He exalts, so far as was compatible with monotheism, the character of Christ, and admits imperfections in the Old Testament. A great step was gained when Judaism departed from the dogged self-sufficiency of its position by admitting the fallibility of its records, and consenting in any degree to submit them to criticism. The compromises adopted by the Alexandrian Jews to account for Scripture incongruities, however lavishly employed, had been found insufficient for the purpose; and the followers of St. Paul had carried the Pauline idea of the independence of Christianity to the extent of ascribing the old law and Old Testament in general to the promptings of the evil principle. The author of the Clementina, in general accordance with the Roman Christianity of his day, makes a different inference from similar premises. He admits that Christianity is not vulgar Judaism, and that the Old Testament, through interpolation and otherwise, contains much derogatory matter about God, which reason or "gnosis" has to distinguish, and to separate the true and authentic from the adscititious and false. In this, as in other respects, he nearly approaches St. Paul, who had already recognised the New Testament in the Old, and claimed for Christians the true sonship and rightful inheritance of Abraham. Moreover, he adopts the principle of Christian universalism; not, indeed, in the sense of a scheme originally impartial, and equally open to Jew and Gentile, but as an extension to Gentiles of privileges essentially Jewish. The conversion of the heathen, which, by the early Roman Christians, had been looked on with so much jealousy, is now confessedly the great business of the Christian teacher; and, to promote this object,

[1] Comp. James i. 14.

the office of Apostle of the Gentiles is unhistorically withdrawn from its proper owner, in order to be transferred to the Jew-Christian leader. It is Peter, not Paul, who is commissioned to preach the Divine Unity to polytheistic Gentiles; the novelty of his Christian preaching consisting merely in the publication to all of what had formerly belonged to Jews exclusively. Peter, however, while propagating Christianity abroad, acts in subordination to James, who presides over the general interests of religion in the holy city of Jerusalem; to James, as his ecclesiastical superior, he has to render an account of his mission; and the selection of Peter, rather than James, to be the knight-errant of Christianity, seems to be part of the conciliatory machinery conducing to the great object of the book, James being the authority of the strict Ebionites, Peter of the catholicising conformists. The interposition of Clemens, too, is probably another instance of the same kind. According to the introductory epistle and "Contestatio Jacobi," in neither of which mention is made of Clemens, the discourses of Peter are to be strictly confined to Jews of approved character; whereas now, in evident disagreement with the original intention,[1] Clemens, the Gentile convert, is the person to whom they are especially committed, and by whom they are written. Hence it has been conjectured[2] that the Homilies and Recognitions are revised compendiums of an antecedent Petrinic literature, namely, the Petrinic "preachings" (Kerugmata) and "journeyings" (Periodoi), so that in these writings, as now presented, the Catholicised Roman Church itself steps forward in the person of its representative, Clemens, to welcome its great Apostle in the supposed original theatre of his labours, and to become his associate in his missionary journeys. The work appears to have been composed about the middle of the second century (A.D. 150-160), that remarkable epoch of the church, when the progress of free opinion made it necessary to meet Gnosticism on its own ground, and to fight it with its own weapons. The writer betrays no consciousness of sectarianism; he holds to precedent, to apostolical tradition, and speaks in the name of the church. He allows to none the title

[1] Hom. i. 20, carelessly introduces an "αυτου κελευσαντος" in regard to the agency of Clemens, without any corresponding alteration of the rest of the sentence. Comp. Epist. Pet. i. with Photius's interpretation of the passage, as meaning "Πετρον τας οικειας συγγραψαι πραξεις." Cod. pp. 112, 113.

[2] Hilgenfeld; Apostolischen Vater, p. 290, Ritschl, Altkatholische Kirche, p. 154.

of a true teacher but those approved by the hierarchy; and staunchly maintains the Ebionitish tenets against Pauline, the latter not having been sanctioned by an actual companion of Jesus.[1]

10. *Gnosticism.*

It is necessary here to advert more particularly to those excursions of speculative opinion which occurred as soon as Christianity was presented to a wider and more educated audience than its first recipients. These extravagances, with which the great majority of believers were wholly unprepared to sympathise, were the natural consequence of a free and fluctuating state of thought, and of the instinctive want felt by the better informed to enlarge a religion of mere sentiment into one which should harmonise with intellect and learning. Already Justin disowns several heretical sects; and the anxiety of Hegesippus, who made it the business of his life to ascertain the correspondence between the different churches in regard to tradition and practice, indicates the time when, alarmed at the progress of novel doctrines, or, as it is termed, "vain discourses," the majority found it necessary to review the strength of their position, and to intrench themselves against the assaults of free opinion. In other words, it was the progress of Gnosticism, which, by presenting a decided contrast to the opinions of the majority, made it necessary for the latter to determine what their opinions were, and at all events to sink minor differences in a league for mutual support. The undue latitudinarianism of Christian thought thus naturally corrected itself, by enforcing a closer coalition and stricter discipline; and it was the pressure of these assaults, immediately felt to proceed from something alien to Christian sentiment, which promoted among the more moderate the catholic or "Petro-Pauline" coalition already adverted to.

Gnosis was an attempt to convert Christianity into philosophy; to place it in its widest relation to the universe, and to incorporate with it the ideas and feelings approved by the best intelligence of the times. Not satisfied with simply stating that Christ came into the world to save that which was

[1] The Clementine "Recognitiones" are supposed by Baur to be a later development of the Homilies on catholic church principles. Hilgenfeld thinks that the relation of priority ought to be reversed.

corrupted and lost, it ventured upon the antecedent inquiries as to the origin of the world and of evil, how redemption first became necessary, and what the nature of the process through which it is to be accomplished. There are so many points of contact between Gnosis and other speculative systems, that it is almost impossible to assign to it any more specific origin than that general property of the intellect which is never satisfied until it has explained, or reduced to a comprehensive formula according to its own conception and laws, the phenomena presented to it. This was the task undertaken by Gnosis; it was the first undisguised attempt to reason about Christianity, to expand its data to the general circumference of free thought.

But human thought is never wholly free; it is tied by preoccupation and habit, and obliged to express itself in forms suggested by its prior acquisitions. Gnostic speculation was very far from being free; like many later systems, it was but a philosophy in fetters, an effort of the mind to form for itself a more systematic belief in its own prejudices. Heathenism and Judaism, Greek philosophy and Oriental speculation, were all of them concerned in preparing the forms to be assumed by Christian thought. Gnosticism, like Christianity, may be said to have been originally Jewish, and to have virtually begun in the pre-Christian period, when in Alexandria Judaism became blended with Greek philosophy. There the Jews for the first time became educated, and consequently their notions about God elevated. They found it impossible to believe any longer in the literal sense of the descriptions of God in the Old Testament; and, in order to reconcile faith with philosophy, had recourse to allegorical interpretation and a machinery of intermediate beings. Hence the Septuagint alters every passage suggesting a visible manifestation of God, by substituting for Jehovah the "angel" or "glory" of Jehovah; and Philo lays it down, that wherever the literal construction furnishes a meaning unworthy of God or of Moses, there we must adopt a figurative one; so that the whole Pentateuch is to be considered as more or less allegorical, concealing beneath the outward fact a higher and deeper meaning.

Alexandrianism was a speculative exegesis of the Old Testament; Gnosis was only a more systematic application of the same kind of treatment to a wider range of materials. The blank left by the removal of God out of an impure world had been filled by Philo with the theory of emanation and an array

of intermediate beings—the logos, the divine powers, and the angels. He identified the Spirit said to have "brooded" over creation with the spirit of wisdom poured from above into man's soul, or breathed into his nostrils at the beginning; and, reasoning from the assumption of an intimate connection and union of all spiritual natures, pronounced the human mind to be under an immediate influence from on high, and to be the temple or tabernacle of God.[1] The same ideas were adopted by Christianity. The Paulinic system differs from the Jew-Christian chiefly in the more complete subordination of all other intermediate beings to Christ,[2] who restores that interrupted connection between God and the world,[3] whereby every Christian, through possession of the Spirit, is able to discern the divine mysteries.[4] This assumption of spiritual intercommunion with God explains the freedom used by Christian as well as Jewish speculation in interpreting the Old Testament and in forming new systems. The same Spirit by which the Scripture was originally dictated enabled the gifted mind to construe it. Philosophy, cramped by orthodoxy, was forced into the way of allegory, as an expedient through which new opinions could be grafted on old traditions; this is the great resource of Philo, the main secret of the spiritual insight of St. Paul,[5] in relation to which, the Epistle of Barnabas exultingly exclaims, "Blessed be God, who has given us wisdom to understand his secrets." A religion founded on revelation must necessarily be infallible and uniform. On the other hand, the progress of time and of events called for development and change. The germ of Christian development and innovation lay dormant in the above hypothesis of the possession of the Spirit;[6] this supplied the means of movement, as the idea of an original revelation upheld the force of conservative resistance. In order to obtain admission for changes in a system founded on such pretensions, it was necessary to suppress the name, to introduce reform under the mask of conservatism, and to give to new ideas the semblance of ancient authority. One means of doing this was allegory. As employed by the inspired interpreters of inspired writings, it signified not merely comparison, but identity of meaning; as to St. Paul, the rock which gave water to the Israelites in the wilderness, and which, in rabbinical tradition, was imagined to

[1] Pfeif. v. 98; Mang. ii. 437. [2] Heb. i. 4. [3] 2 Cor. v. 19.
[4] 1 Cor. ii. 10; Rom. viii. 16. [5] See 1 Cor. x. 1. [6] 1 John ii. 27; 1 Pet. i. 12.

have followed them about for the purpose, was not only typical of Christ, but *was* Christ.[1] The pseudonymous literature of early Christianity was another instance of the same kind. It was an attempt to introduce new developments of Christian consciousness under the sanction of ancient authority. It was the only means which at the time could be resorted to for the purpose of maintaining, amidst movement and change, the notion of infallibility; or rather, it was a necessary result of that assumption of infallibility which a revelation implied. In later times, the organs of infallible truth were the councils; in the primitive age every new suggestion was referred to the Apostles. The very existence of the church, considered as the depository of divine truth, depended on a firm conviction of the unity and consistency of its creed, as identical with "the faith once delivered to the saints;" and since there could be no real contrariety between two draughts from the same spiritual source, it followed that the suggestions of the Spirit of to-day which seemed to place the original revelation in its true light, might properly be considered as part and parcel of that revelation, and to have been disseminated under the name of those to whom its first outlines had been committed. The continually-expanding sphere of Christian consciousness was thus referred back to the times and teaching of the Apostles. The liberty of publishing under assumed names which became so general, was only an extension of the original claim of St. Paul, who, as first innovator and advocate of progress, immediately assumed the authorisation of the Spirit in dealing with the Old Testament. Some teachers allowed themselves wider latitude than others, while Jew-Christianity for the most part assumed the attitude of stability and resistance; the policy of the church, or rather the instinctive feeling of the majority which afterwards became the church, was compromise between the two, and an avoidance of extremes—the extreme conservatism which ultimately became isolated as heretical Ebionitism, and the innovating extreme, variously exemplified in Montanism or Gnosticism.

[1] "Messias—in deserto *fuit* rupes ecclesiæ Zionis." Targum Isai. xvi. 1; De Wette to 1 Cor. x. 4.

11. *Gnostic Systems.*

Christian speculation adopted Alexandrian allegory, in full belief that the inferences it evoked were something higher than faith, containing real "knowledge" and absolute truth. All its forms were more or less eclectic; but its main source, as the author of the recently-published "Philosophoumena" tries to show, was Greek symbolism and philosophy; from which, aided by Jewish and Christian imagery, it attempted to fill up the blank caused by the elevation of the Supreme God beyond the material world. To do this, to reunite creation to a Being placed so far above it as almost to fade into nonentity, the Gnostics again had recourse to the Alexandrian principles of emanations or projections of the Supreme Spirit; and thus were formed the Æons, who, personifying the various relations and limitations of the Absolute, constituted a series of ideal links through which the desired connection was effected. Of these beings the most prominent was Sophia, the youngest and weakest of them, whose sufferings and recovery form a metaphysical romance expressive of the soul's fall and recovery. But spirit could not become associated with matter except through some intermediate nature; hence the necessity of assuming a third or "psychic" principle, mythically incorporated in the notion of a "Demiurgus." The Demiurgus was emblem and ruler of the finite and transitory, arrayed in those gross personal attributes which, suited rather to the weakness of the human faculties than to Divine greatness, had been employed in the Old Testament, and were, indeed, the chief elements of the mythologies. In comparison with the purified and abstract God of Gnosticism, all other gods with their correlated systems necessarily fell into a lower rank; and thus the God of Judaism, in his character of "world-framer" and partial protector, reappeared in the Gnostic "Demiurgus" as an inferior, or even hostile principle. But it was the nature of the "psychic" to be temporary and transitory. Its abiding essence was the pneumatic element contained in it, and the solution of the enigma, which began with the Spirit's emanation, was discovered in the reversal of the process by its re-absorption. The finite antagonism of spirit and matter ends in the victory of the former, and the restoration of all things into the plenitude of the Infinite. Gnosticism pourtrays the ideal drama of

the soul in its passage through the material and finite, up to its return to the unlimited fulness of its proper nature; gnosis being itself the means of its liberation or return, through the recovery of a consciousness of its inherently supermundane nature. The great representative of the restoring efficacy is Christ. He occupies in the ascending scale an intermediary position analogous to that of the Demiurgus in the descending. Whatever tends to restore the harmony of all, to raise the fallen, and to promote the final spiritual consummation, is mythically blended with his name. Christianity in this kind of Gnosis shifts its ground. Addressing the reason instead of the feelings, its object is not so much the salvation of the individual as the explanation of the universe. It is no longer a mere acquiescent acceptance of present privation, but an inquiry into its general cause, and the means provided for its extinction. Its Christ is not merely the human Redeemer, but the talisman of universal restoration. Such is the principle represented by "Christ" in the celestial sphere of the Æons; Jesus was its historical representative among men; with him Christ became mysteriously united, in order that he might gather together all that exists in heaven and earth, according to the eternal purpose of the Supreme to reconcile all things to Himself.[1] The systems of Gnosis which most completely exhibit its nature, are those which, like the allegorical romance of Valentinus, are the most nearly allied with heathen thought and symbolism, subordinating Jewish and Christian types to the grand purpose of cosmical explanation. The early names in the history of Gnosis are probably only mythic expressions of its presumed origin and tendencies. The "Simon Magus" of the Fathers is the personified intermixture of heathenism and Judaism;[2] his professed identity with the Father or Supreme Being may mean his supposed authorship of a more elevated idea of Him; and his adjunct Helena denotes, in mythical language, the differentiating principle which the Gnostics were obliged to connect with their abstract Deity in order to account in a popularly-appreciable way for the evolution of the world.

[1] Ephes. i. 10; iii. 9, 10; Coloss. i. 20.

[2] Hence he is said to have converted to his purpose, not only the dicta of Moses, but those of the Greek poets. Philosophoumena, vi. 19.

12. *Marcion.*

Gnosis, like Christianity, was originally Jewish; it was intimately connected with the Jewish Platonism of Alexandria, and its most prominent early type was the Ebionitish name Cerinthus. The sects of Valentinus and the Ophitæ were, probably, for the most part, composed of Jew-Christians;[1] and though eventually in some of its forms it came to present the strongest antithesis to Judaism, its orthodox opponents might still call it a Jewish phenomenon, or "Jewish fables."[2] Yet the tendencies of free thought were generally anti-Judaical; and a reaction towards free thought was the essence of Gnosis. It was a necessary consequence of the continuing Judaical spirit in Christianity that it should most resent that form of Christian speculation which carried to the furthest extent the anti-Judaic principle. Hence the most remarkable form of Gnosis is that of Marcion, which, based on the free views of St. Paul, powerfully contributed to mature the great idea of the post-apostolic age, the emancipation of Christianity, and its permanent establishment in men's minds as an independent religion. Every system of Gnosis took its stand outside, as it were, of current religious denominations, pronouncing its independent judgment on their relative importance. All gave the first place to Christianity as the last and perfect revelation, superseding or completing preceding ones. But they differed in the comparative estimate put on other systems; since Christianity might either be considered as developed out of other systems, or contrasted with them; as alone true, or as admitting a minor degree of truth in

[1] Baur, Pastoral-briefe, p. 12.

[2] Titus i. 14; comp. 1 Tim. i. 4; iv. 7; Ignatius to the Magnes. ch. viii. The late origin of the pastoral letters, as proceeding, not from St. Paul, but from the catholicised Roman Church of the second century (see especially the pointed allusion to the technical church *institution* of widowhood, as opposed to actual widowhood, in 1 Tim. v.; comp. Ignatius, Smyrn. ch. iii.), may be assumed, in spite of the natural reluctance of the "orthodox," as certain. The heresy alluded to is described by name as the "falsely so-called Gnosis" (1 Tim. vi. 20); which, according to Hegesippus in Eusebius (Hist. Eccl. iii. 32, otto, i. p. 267), did not venture to show itself openly until after the Apostles and their immediate followers had quitted the scene. The only doubt is as to the particular kind of Gnosis intended: 1 Tim. vi. 20, is certainly a very unmistakable specification of Marcion's "Antitheses;" but the writer's object is, doubtless, not so much to single out any particular form of heresy, as to warn his readers against Gnosis and wayward speculation generally. Baur (Paulus, p. 495) remarks the probability that the writer had before him the work of Hegesippus, whose very words he uses.

one or both the former ones. Matter, the Demiurgus, and the Spirit, were the three great cosmical principles, historically developed, it was supposed, under the form of three religions—heathenism with its physical divinities representing matter; Judaism, emanating from the creating Demiurgus of Genesis; and Christianity, the religion of the "pneumatici" or spiritual adorers of the Supreme God. Between early Christianity and Judaism, there could scarcely have arisen a calculation of relative worth, since one was only a new form of the other. But when St. Paul had become convinced of the essential inefficacy of that law in which he had been educated, and through which, if through any, he believed that righteousness and life might have been secured, he was led to look beyond for something higher and stronger than law, and this he discovered in the phenomena of the Christian profession, which seemed, according to the Scripture *promise*, to offer the reconciliation or union with God vainly sought for in the older system. The latter had been a source of sin, a sentence of condemnation and death; the new theory was the power of God for life. Christ's nature underwent a corresponding transformation; he was no longer a mere man, the Jewish Messiah, but the personified power or spirit of God. Yet Judaism, though really subverted by St. Paul, was not by him formally repudiated; the God of the Jews was still to him the God of the Gentiles; Judaism was a partial parenthetic manifestation of a world-wide scheme; and the same revelation which imposed the restraints and responsibilities of the law, contained also "the promise," or paramount "gospel of grace,"[1] given antecedently to Abraham. But when the feeling, through which St. Paul contrived to escape from moral perplexities, came to be matter of cool reflection and comparison (a transition marked by the tendency to substitute the word γνωσις for πιστις), the incompatibility of the two schemes became apparent. St. Paul's assertion of the principle of religious freedom was in reality only the independent expression of the Christian consciousness; but his language was too mystical to be popularly understood, and its immediate effect in the Paulinic churches, as instanced in Galatia, Ephesus, Thessalonica, and Corinth, was to produce discord and disruption, either by provoking a reactionary Judaism, or by encouraging every arbitrary variety of speculative development in the way of fanatical excite-

[1] Gal. iii. 8, seq.

ment or of Gnostic speculation. Consistency might seem to require that Gnosis, being philosophical and pantheistic, should have extended to heathenism and Judaism a share, at least, of the divine qualities fully manifested in Christ; yet its tendency, as shown in its most emphatically Christian form, was to place itself in direct hostility to the systems which Christ's had absorbed or superseded. "The separation of law and gospel," says Tertullian,[1] "was the proper work of Marcion." Marcion, repelled probably by the rudeness and rigorism of the Asiatic churches, came to Rome, then the metropolis of intellect, about the middle of the second century, and propounded to the Christian "Elders" of that city the question, what did Christ mean by saying, "Let not new wine be poured into old bottles, nor new clothes be patched with old cloth." Convinced of the essential newness of Christianity, he thought it high time to discard the old rags of Judaism, to make a distinct renunciation of the Demiurgus of the Old Testament, who might be just, but certainly was not good. Marcion's Christianity was the religion of love; as such, it was unquestionably a new religion, for the God of Judaism could only represent jealousy, severity, and hate. Marcion was the first openly to condemn those unworthy descriptions of the Supreme Being which the Alexandrian theosophy had evaded by means of allegory. A God influenced by passion is no longer a God. "If God," he said, "be jealous, inconstant, furious, &c. like man, how are we to distinguish him from inferior natures? How account for his allowing man to be circumvented by the Devil, except by supposing that He either could not, or would not, prevent it?" Marcion did not attempt to allegorise Scripture; he took the obvious meaning, and this he at once found to be repulsive and absurd. He was shocked at the idea of Adam playing hide-and-seek with God in the garden, and at God's "coming down" to see if the reports about Sodom were true. Even the attribute of justice could hardly be said to belong to one who broke his own laws, for instance, in sanctioning serpent worship, sabbath-breaking,[2] and stealing the goods of the Egyptians. But justice itself is far inferior to goodness; it is as ferocity opposed to mercy, and the God of grace and mercy was first revealed in Christ. He appeared for the first time, when in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar, he entered under the form of Jesus into the synagogue of Caper-

[1] Adv. Marc. i. 19. [2] Josh. vi. 15.

naum. Marcion wrote a treatise, called "Antitheses," composed of contrasted passages from Law and Gospel, in order more plainly to show the inconsistency of the two systems. He pointed out the benignity of him who spared the cities of Samaria, the friend of those little children whom the Demiurgus, at the solicitation of Elisha, sent bears to devour, or destroyed by fire from heaven. He willingly dwelt, too, on the Saviour's anti-Mosaic acts, his laxity in Sabbath observance, his touching the unclean, his patronage of publicans, Samaritans, and Greeks. He contrasted the real Christ with the Jewish Messiah, armed with all the fierce characteristics of the Demiurgus; and in order to cut off all possibility of a relation between this real Christ and the Creator of the world, he showed that he neither was born nor died, that he came down suddenly from heaven, and underwent a visionary death only to express, by a striking symbol, the emancipation of the spiritual from the carnal prefigured in his life. Marcion's Gnosticism was pre-eminently what is called "Docetic." Docetism, or the theory of a visionary Christ, shared under various forms and degrees by all theories of Gnosis, was employed to meet the requirements of a refined Christianity, just as the Alexandrian construction of the Old Testament theophanies grew out of a more elevated Judaism; and the ascetic renunciation of the world of the Demiurgus which made redemption consist in escape from the material, could base its hopes of emancipation only on an untainted incorporeal Redeemer. The attributes of Christ reflected the progressive growth of Christian consciousness; and in proportion as his followers felt themselves elevated above the trammels of the world and of Judaism, his religion became independent, and his person superhuman. It may be observed that, in the Docetism of Marcion there occurs a trace of the mythical form common to all Gnosticism; since, while it seems to obliterate an historical fact, it only the more vividly and expressively substantiates a theoretical idea.

13. *Jew-Christian Gnosis.*

Marcion's theory differed fundamentally from the earlier forms of metaphysical mythology propounded by Valentinus and other Gnostics. For, whereas they had striven to mediate between preceding religious systems, to eliminate contradic-

tions, and to promote coalition by means of ideal agents and emanations, in Marcion every link was abruptly severed, the Æons and trials of Sophia disappeared, the idea of progressive development was abandoned, and Christianity stood alone in isolated antagonism. The reason may be that the earlier Gnostic systems were attempts to explain the world and its evolutions to the intellect, while Marcion's appealed almost exclusively to the moral sentiments; the one, in explaining Christianity, borrowed the ideas and language of heathenism; Marcion's theory was an earnest expression of the specifically Christian consciousness, disowning and extruding everything, both heathen and Jewish, which seemed alien to its nature. It was natural that in a faith still closely allied with Judaism whose adherents gloried in being the "true Israelites,"[1] so partial and extreme an expression of all that was new and peculiar in it should provoke a reaction. The Clementine Homilies are the reply of the ultra-Judaists within the church to the disruption insisted on by Marcion, maintaining the continuity of Judaism and Christianity, and proscribing all other religions as heathenish and false. Goaded into active opposition by the success of the anti-Jewish theory, they bitterly attack its author under the name of the Samaritan arch-impostor, Simon Magus,[2] the general representative of all those heathenish heretical tendencies of which, to the Jewish mind, Samaria had been the type; and the attack includes St. Paul himself, who, temporarily respited, it would seem, by his death from the active antipathy of his enemies, is here again denounced as the "lawless" and "hateful" man,[3] convicted by the now evident consequences of his doctrine to have been the real origin of all the mistakes and discords of the church. Judaism, however obstinate on particular points, had always been in practice a changing faith, susceptible of self-modification and correction. Christianity was itself a modified Judaism, professing to complete and realise all that, in the old religion, had been prospective and ideal; and St. Paul thought that he gave a true when giving a new interpretation to the Hebrew

[1] 1 Pet. x. 11, 12; ii. 9.

[2] It has been shown (see Baur's Gnosis, p. 306; and Zeller, in the Tübingen Theol. Jahrbücher, vol. viii. pp. 378, 380) that this notable Simon, who flew up in the air, made statues speak, whose adjunct Helena was unmistakably the moon, and who at last was buried alive (Clem. Recog. ii. 14; Hom. ii. 23; Philosophoumena, vi. 20), was probably a Samaritan idol, or nature god. (See also Justin, Apol. i. 26.)

[3] Epist. Petri, ch. ii.

oracles as foreshadowing Christian mysteries, the passage of the Red Sea meaning baptism, the miraculous manna the sacramental bread, the passover offering Christ. The writer of "Hebrews" acquiesces in the dissolution of old institutions,[1] calling on Jew-Christians to advance from "the elements" of religious knowledge to "perfection;"[2] to quit dead works and useless ceremonies, to look to the new covenant, and to recognise in the waning forms of Judaism only types and shadows of which Christ and his religion were the substance. A transition was thus insensibly effected to a new sphere of opinion by men who were often scarcely aware of the process they were engaged in. The Epistle of Barnabas has a more decidedly Gnostic character depending on allegorical interpretation. The ceremonies of Mosaic ritual are said to be no longer binding; but they are not regarded, as they had been by St. Paul, as having subserved a temporary purpose now answered and superseded, but as having been from the first only types of things to come, and so made not so much for Jewish use as for Christian.[3] The "rest" or Sabbath, for example, alluded to in "Hebrews,"[4] is explained[5] in an exclusively Christian sense to mean the Sabbatical millennium of the Christian era of redemption. The Jews were too gross to understand the real meaning of their oracles, the discernment of which is the true Gnosis. The writer of Barnabas draws from Jewish premises specifically Christian conclusions, while almost denouncing common Judaism as Satanic;[6] so that Christian speculation was both Judaical and anti-Judaical, retaining the ancient forms which it used for its own purposes. Justin's view of the relative value of Judaism comes near to that of Barnabas. He speaks of Christianity as a new law, in which, for the first time, are displayed the real tendencies of the old. He asserts the superiority of Christianity to Judaism, together with its virtual identity with it; and makes the Old Testament the standard of absolute truth when construed after the Alexandrian fashion of type and allegory. But the philosopher wishes to connect Christianity with heathenism as well as Judaism; to show that heathen wisdom as well as Jewish law were preparatory revelations. As, to convince Jews, he had proved all the essential facts of Christianity to be already in the Old

[1] Ch. viii. 13. [2] Ch. vi. 1. [3] Comp. 1 Pet. i. 12.
[4] Ch. iv. 9; comp. iv. 2. [5] Ch. xv. [6] Ch. ix.

Testament, so he argues with the heathen that Christianity even to them was nothing unprecedented, and that they were already to a great extent Christians without knowing it. As Barnabas had made the notable discovery that Abraham's circumcision meant Christ's crucifixion, and that the 318 men whom Abraham circumcised of his household, alluded to the numerals of the initial letters of the Saviour's name,[1] so Justin professes astonishment at heathen incredulity, when the commonest instruments employed in husbandry, manufactures, and navigation, all exhibited the unmistakable sign of the cross; the mast and yard, the mattock of the digger, the military standard, all expressing the same form; nay, it was displayed in their own noses, according to the Scripture intimation, "the spirit before their faces is Christ the Lord."[2] The form of thought through which Justin and others for the most part try to connect Christianity with preceding systems is the Logos doctrine, a term which, proceeding from Alexandrian Platonism, has the advantage of comprising both reason and speech, the "word" of creation and the "word" of prophecy. Whatever, either in Judaism or heathendom, may seem true and rational, is vindicated as the gift of the Logos, and is therefore Christian, since Christianity is only the full effulgence of that light or reason which had always been in the world, though its anterior revelations were partial and fragmentary. The desire to enlarge the range of Christianity by an adoption of Hellenic elements exhibited in Justin's "spermatic word," is differently shown in the Clementine Homilies. Less liberal than the philosophical Apologist who saw in all religions the "germs" at least of truth,[3] the Clementine writer strictly confines religious truth to the one continuous revelation commenced in Judaism and completed by Christ. Yet he does, in fact, borrow from Greek philosophy, as well as Jewish, materials for his own system; and while maintaining the principle of religious continuity, feels obliged to concede the basis of the anti-Jewish theory of Marcion which he controverts, namely, the existence of evil, the corruption of matter, a moral dualism coextensive with the universe,[4] and a specific exemplification

[1] The 300 being the T, or cross (ch. ix.); Barnabas adds, with solemn satisfaction at his own ingenuity, "God knows, I never taught to any one a more certain truth; I trust that ye are worthy of it."

[2] Lamentations iv. 20; Justin, Apol. i. 55. [3] Apol. i. 44.

[4] Even the most passionate adversary of Marcion (Tertullian, Adv. Marc. i. 16)

of it in the errors and derogatory representations of the Old Testament. But he draws a different conclusion from the same premises. He does not, any more than Marcion, try to conceal the errors, or to evade the open admission of them by resorting to allegory, but contends that the real Mosaic revelation must not be confounded with the adventitious mistakes encumbering it; and that by means of Gnosis, consisting in sincere love of God and firm adherence to the true idea of Him, genuine Scripture may be distinguished from unworthy representations and interpolated fictions. The occurrence of these arises not from there being two Gods, but from the fallibility of human apprehension and expression, whose inevitable results, immediately connected with the agency of an evil principle,[1] have been allowed to remain by the one true God in order to test or try the hearts of the faithful. Clearly, Moses could not have written the account of his own death; and it follows from this, and from other internal evidence, that his revelations were committed to writing by persons who themselves were not prophets. Where, then, it may be asked, are we to find a reliable criterium of truth, since false religions exist as well as true, and Scripture itself is so multifarious in its assertions that we may prove from it almost what we will?[2] The answer is, that we must inquire of "the true prophet;" and, again, in order to be able to distinguish the true prophet, we must become acquainted with the exact conditions of that law of contrast (syzygy) erroneously understood and expressed by Marcion, which seems in this, and all other instances, to be

did not venture to deny the doctrine of antithesis. He says: "Confirmamus diversitatem hanc visibilium et invisibilium adeo Creatori deputandam, sicuti tota operatio ejus ex diversitatibus constat," &c.

[1] Hom. ii. 38 (comp. Barnabas, ch. ix.). Other instances have been already given (see above, p. 39) of attempts on the part of the later Jews to explain the Old Testament anomalies by the agency of the devil. The Clementine writer wishes to construct a system of Gnosis without a hostile Demiurgus, and without a dualism; yet, in fact, he admits both. Content with asserting the supremacy, unity, and universal causality of the Creator, he allows, nevertheless, the existence of a "ἡγεμων κακιας," or evil principle, opposed to Christ as "ἡγεμων ευσεβειας," and proceeding from God in some respects, though only to be regarded as permitted by him in others. The world is thus placed under the immediate rule of a being produced out of a fortuitous mingling of the elements, perhaps more opposed to God than even Marcion's Demiurgus; although to escape this inference he is called God's left hand, the enforcer of law, and punisher of the wicked. Comp. Uhlhorn, Die Homilien, p. 185.

[2] Hom. iii. 10.

the essence of the physical and moral constitution of the world. In the evolution of the world from God, the better necessarily preceded the worse; heaven was before earth, light before darkness(?), life before death. But from the era of the creation of man (who, however, as being after the divine image, produced from himself an inferior, Eve), the order of succession has been inverted, the better member of the syzygy always coming last; thus man proceeds from woman, Abel succeeded Cain, Noah's dove the raven, Isaac Ishmael, Jacob Esau, Moses Aaron, and generally true prophecy to false, as Jesus came after John, Peter followed Simon Magus, and hereafter the true Christ would follow Antichrist, the present merge in the future, time in eternity. True prophecy is to false as male to female, or the future world to the present. As the present world, like a mother, bears souls which eternity is to receive and educate as a father, so the true prophets, who, as sons of futurity, bring their perfect knowledge into the present, are always last in order of succession, and if men had comprehended this law or order, they need never have been in error. They would have comprehended at once the relative claims of Peter and the false impostor Simon; they would have seen that Peter came after Simon, as light after darkness, knowledge after ignorance, and healing after sickness.[1] He who, formed in God's express image, and proceeding directly from God's hand, received the first spiritual afflatus, was of course the first and greatest of prophets. He knew all things, and gave names to all, the same which had already been assigned by the Creator. To him was given empire over earth, air, and water, and he had that ineffable "vesture" of the soul through which he might become immortal.[2] Adam promulgated God's true eternal law; and while it was observed, earth brought forth her fairest fruits, the elements propitious seasons, in short, it was the golden age. But absence of ill made men thoughtless, corrupt, and irreligious. At length perverted habits and communication obscured the truth, so that the world became as a smoky house, whose inmates cannot see the light. It was therefore necessary that truth should be revealed afresh, and this was done by a succession of prophets, called the "seven pillars" of the world, or rather by successive manifestations of the one spirit

[1] This passage (ii. 17) seems to contain an indirect admission of the priority of the Pauline teaching.

[2] Hom. iii. 20.

terminating in Christ; that one true prophet who, "from the beginning of time, changing his name with his form, passed through the ages, until, anointed for his labours by God, he entered into an eternal Sabbath of repose." The writer admits the universalism of Christianity, but not its originality and independence. It is not, as taught by St. Paul, an inward renewal of the mind, but the universal promulgation of a truth which, though not new, had been obscured. Its essence consists in observance of precepts already extant, but requiring a criterium to verify and distinguish them. Christ was himself the criterium, and the anticipation of his coming was itself part of Old Testament truth. He came not to destroy but to fulfil; yet, by destroying,[1] he showed practically that much of the old law was false, or rather that much accidentally mixed up with it really formed no part of that which was to outlast the world. And as, before Christ's appearance, the true prophecy was committed to a faithful few, so, since his coming, the criterium of infallibility has been vested in the apostles and their successors,[2] so that the only way of escaping from the uncertainties of opinion and Scripture interpretation so dangerously prominent in the case of Marcion, is to place unlimited confidence in the actual representations of "true prophecy," *i.e.* the inspired heads of the church.

[1] Matt. xv. 30. [2] Ch. xvii. 19.

PART IV:

ORIGIN OF THE CHURCH,

AND ITS

CONFLICT WITH HEATHENISM.

PART IV.

ORIGIN OF THE CHURCH.

1. *Heresy and Orthodoxy.*

The Homilies contain all the elements of the hierarchical system successfully carried out afterwards by the Church of Rome. The civil importance of Rome would alone have sufficed to make it the metropolis of Christendom. When the fall of Jerusalem had removed the greatest practical impediment to a more free and universal religion, Rome succeeded by general assent to a pre-eminence which became the basis of her subsequent usurpations. Every one who felt able to contribute to the development of thought hastened to the great city; Justin the philosopher, Polycarp the Asiatic bishop, the Gnostics Valentinus and Marcion, Praxeas the Alogian, and Proclus the Montanist. At first there seemed to be little prospect of union and organisation amid the rivalries of conflicting ideas, which were not as yet made amenable to any rule or standard. Justin's dialogue with Trypho, written about A. D. 150, shows how vague was the then idea of orthodoxy,[1] and how slow the progress towards a definite understanding among the various parties who, under irregular impulses of liberality or intolerance, excused or reprehended each other. In the latitudinarian spirit of his day, Justin scruples not to allow[2] that Socrates, Heraclitus, and, indeed, all who, before the Redeemer's coming, had lived agreeably to reason (Logos), were entitled to the name of Christian. The same laxity is seen in the multifarious writings bearing the name of Clement; among which even an Ebionitish work like the Homilies was welcomed as a useful confederate whose individual eccentricity was hardly noticeable in the fluctuating condition of the faith. The Gnostic Cerdo was again and again received, after repeated lapses, into the

[1] See chs. xlvii., xlviii., lxxx. [2] Apol. i. 46.

communion of the church;[1] and the exceptional exasperation of the opponents of Marcion at least proves his popularity, which, however, is directly attested by Epiphanius, Theodoret, and others; the former calling him the "great serpent" misleading the whole world. Compared with the austerity of the Asiatic churches, Rome seems to have been the centre of liberalism; and the visit of the intolerant Smyrniote bishop Polycarp[2] to that city, was probably not confined to the object of effecting individual conversions, but included that of urging the leaders of the church to more stringent measures against heresy.[3] The term "heresy" of course implies that toleration had its limits. But it was only after long controversy and manifold trial that the new religion arrived at such a clear apprehension of its own principle and of its proper attitude in relation to surrounding thought, as to enable it to propound a system of orthodox dogma.[4] Orthodoxy arose instinctively out of the approximation and tacit concessions of the leading parties; while their divergent extremes prominently exhibited in various forms of Gnosis, acted partly to suggest new ideas, partly as bounds or barriers within which popular opinion was tutored to follow its legitimate track. The first open contradiction encountered by Christianity had been the Jewish aversion to a crucified Saviour, and to its fundamental axiom that "this man" (Jesus of Nazareth) was the Messiah. When from the extent of its conversions, the fanaticism, secrecy, and, in many respects, antisocial maxims of its adherents,[5] it began to assume

[1] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iv. 11.

[2] He is said, when saluted by Marcion in the streets, to have coarsely replied, "Hail to the first-born of Satan." Euseb. iv. 14.

[3] Tübingen Th. Magazine, vol. ix. p. 268.

[4] A comparison of the Clem. Homilies with the false Ignatian Epistles, written, in all probability, about the same time and in the same city, exhibits a curious contrast: the one combating Gnosticism from the Judaical, the other from the Pauline side; the one more especially opposing the Docetism of the Gnostics, the other their Dualism. From this and other indications it would seem that catholicism was a practical rather than a theoretical alliance; that unity of opinion was posterior and secondary to unity of government.

[5] The spiritual worship of Christianity appeared to idolators atheistical; its earnestness to be superstitious folly; its secret meetings gave rise to injurious suspicions; and its anticipation of an immediate catastrophe and aversion to military and civil service, seemed, notwithstanding the disclaimer of the church (1 Pet. ii. 13), to countenance the imputation of that irreconcilable hostility to human governments and human interests (see Tacitus, Annal. xv. 44; the Apocalypse generally; the admonition of St. Paul in Romans xiii. 1; Hermas, Simil. i.; Barnabas ii.; Tertullian de Cor. ch. xi.; Apol. xxxvii. and xxxviii.; De Pallio, ch. v.; Schwegler, N. Z. ii. 255), which induced some of the best and most philosophical of the emperors to enforce the laws against it as a foreign superstition.

a menacing political import, it came into collision with the civil authorities; and hence the long-protracted struggle beginning with that atrocity of Nero which identified him in the Christian mind with their great ideal adversary or "Antichrist."[1] At length it turned out that the most dangerous foes of the church were some of its own members[2] who presumed to think and to worship independently; and it then appeared that there were "many Antichrists;"[3]—persons denying the Messiahship of Jesus, his historical appearance "in the flesh,"[4] or the precise nature of his Dualistic or Trinitarian relation to the Godhead. But, as in the arts, experience of the bad leads to the discovery of something better, so, according to some of the Alexandrian Fathers,[5] the mistakes of heresy were not only allowable but useful in promoting the establishment of orthodoxy. Heresy was a term taken from the philosophical sects or schools of Greece; a name assumed by themselves, and which Christianity, therefore, reproachfully gave to such of its members as were really or apparently connected with them. As used by Christians it implied the manifold error of arbitrary opinion as opposed to that of the majority, non-agreement with which, it was thought, could proceed only from immoral motives, from pride, wilful perversity, or self-interest.[6] The Gnostics were the archetypes of heresy, because they were the first who, in attempting to rationalise Christianity, endangered its foundations, transferring it from the domain of feeling to that of speculation, and substituting intellectual mysticism for its simple requirements of faith and moral purity. Opposition from without promoted clearness of perception within; and it was chiefly by way of antithesis to Gnosis that orthodoxy became defined, in its turn making heresy more conspicuous in proportion as the majority of believers were united. The principle of union, as above explained, was a modified Jew-Christianity, professing to be the universal religion of both Testaments, and, in the name of a "higher intelligence"[7] and specific election,[8] blending practical holiness with faith in the atonement. Yet a comparison of the Clementine Homilies with the deutero-Pau-

[1] Rev. xvii. 20; 2 Thess. ii. 3; iv. 8; see Georgii in the Tübingen Theol. Magazine for 1845, p. 7. Eusebius makes every new phase of opposition encountered by Christianity a new aspect of Satan. See Hist. Eccl. iv. 7.

[2] 1 John ii. 18, 19. [3] Ib. ii. 18, 22. [4] Ch. iv. 2, 3.

[5] Clement of Alexandria (Strom. vii. p. 867), and Isidore of Pelusium.

[6] Irenæ, iii. 3, 2. [7] "πλειων γνωσις," or "τελειοτης." 1 Clem. ch. xli.

[8] 1 Pet. ii, 9; i. 15, 19.

linic and Petrinic writings proves how pliable even then was orthodoxy, and how wide the range of allowable opinion; perhaps, indeed, the consciousness of unity would never have been effectually realised if the matter had been left to mere argument, and had not been subjected to the forcible compression of episcopal government.

2. *The Hierarchy.*

Episcopacy acted as an antidote to heresy, not only by barring its encroachments, but by diverting the mind from speculation. Democracy encourages faction; monarchy represses it; and to keep down the separatist and destructive tendencies of abnormal teaching, the best resource lay in monarchical government. The church was often compared to a tower, of which the lay members were the *stones*,[1] hoisted unresistingly into their places by means of the Holy Ghost; the latter were supposed to have no right to think or interfere in doctrinal matters; they were to avoid "vain babblings," and to confine themselves strictly to the task of "walking worthily."[2] The close connection between episcopacy and the repression of opinion, between disciplinal and doctrinal union, is illustrated by their constant association in the later New Testament writings; and bishops, from their very origin, are proved to have been the enemies of free thought. In the Pastoral Epistles, for example, the denunciation of heresy goes hand in hand with the advocacy of bishops. The controversy, as here stated, is no longer with internal enemies, but with excommunicated rivals; *i.e.* the falsely so-called science or Gnosis of Valentinus and Marcion.[3] To St. Paul the idea of an organised church was as unknown as it had been to Jesus. Neither of them made any provision as to the exact external form to be assumed by the members of "Christ's body," which, indeed, in St. Paul's own

[1] 1 Pet. ii. 5; Hermas, Vis. ii. 3, 4; Ignatius to Ephes. ch. ix.

[2] Ephes. iii. 10; iv. 1. On the danger and uselessness of inquiry, comp. Irenæ, Proem. i.; Ignatius, Smyrn. vii.; 2 Tim. iii. 7.

[3] "Neither here, nor in the 2nd Ep. Peter, is heresy particularly defined; it is only denounced in the vaguest possible terms as a "damnable" aberration from the teaching of the church (see 2 Pet. ii. 1), hostility to which is hostility to truth (comp. 2 Pet. ii. 2, and ii. 10): the denunciation is (as usual) accompanied with bitter imputations on the immorality of the dissentients; and here there is no want of an accurate catalogue of vices." (See 2 Pet. ii. 10, &c.)

day seemed to offer little prospect of harmonious coherence.[1] The practical and theoretical consequences of the principle of unity in regard to faith and government were conceded by later Paulinists only when they had swerved from or forgotten their first ideas, acquiescing in the necessity of confederation to ward off the inroads of Gnosis; and yet some of the true liberality of Paulinism may be traced in the earliest allusions to the hierarchy from the Pauline side,[2] already deprecating the "lording it over the flocks," *i.e.* its gross usurpations and abuses. The first Clementine Epistle, though maintaining with St. Paul, Barnabas, Hebrews, &c.[3] the spiritual equality of all Christians, carries the hierarchical idea far beyond its model, the "Hebrews,"[4] advocating, in analogy with Jewish precedent, the establishment of a sacerdotal class and ecclesiastical ordinances.[5] Episcopacy is declared to be an institution warranted by the Levitical provisions of the Old Testament. Hence, in contradiction to Heb. vii. 14, it makes Christ a Levite;[6] and urges the laity, though without any forfeiture of their general priestly character as Christians, or their right of veto in ecclesiastical elections, to pay due honour to the clergy.[7] But the idea is much more clearly developed in another Roman work already often referred to, the Ebionitish Homilies, whose warm advocacy of the episcopate, and self-confident assumption of orthodoxy, seem indisputably to prove that even Docetism was not, at the date of its composition, disallowed or even discountenanced at Rome. Peace, it says, is possible only under the rule of one. The cause of wars is the multitude of kings; if there were but one, there would be eternal peace.[8] Hence the advantage of ecclesiastical monarchy. The church is like a ship whose captain is God, its steersman Christ, with the bishop for his first lieutenant; persecutions, heresies, &c. are as winds and waves; the passengers are the community, who, though occasionally troubled with a moral sea-sickness relieving them in a disagreeable way of their evil humours and propensities, are at last brought safely into port by the exertions of the bishop,[9] the

[1] 1 Cor. i. 10, 12; iii. 3; xi. 18.

[2] 1 Pet. v. 3; comp. Schwegler, N. Z. ii. p. 6. "The ideas and language of this Epistle," says Eichhorn, "are so decidedly Pauline, that any one familiar with St. Paul's peculiarities, would find in it only a repetition of what he had already read under another name."

[3] Ch. xlvi.; comp. Heb. iii. 1; vi. 4; viii. 10, 11; x. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 5.

[4] Comp. ch. xiii. 17. [5] Quoting Isaiah lx. 17. [6] See ch. xxxii.

[7] See especially ch. xl. to xliv. [8] Hom. iii. 62. [9] Epist. Jacob. ch. xiv. 15, 16.

legitimate guardian of truth. The bishop is Christ's vicegerent, whom to offend is to offend himself. He is the "Mediator" through whom individual Christians must approach God, the master of real Gnosis, without whom there can be no salvation. Next to bishops came presbyters, afterwards deacons. These three classes form the clergy, who are officially entitled to govern an ignorant laity bound to implicit obedience. Even the idea of the popedom, as soon afterwards realised under Victor and Zephyrinus, is suggested in the Homilies; where, as the bishop is head of the congregation, so the monarchical union of all individual congregations is represented in James, the "bishop of bishops," enthroned on the "Cathedra" or seat of Moses,[1] receiving reports from all quarters in the then reputed centre of the Christian world, and issuing edicts as source of infallible truth and guardian of tradition. The complete plan of church government and polity contained in the Ebionitish original of the "Apostolical Constitutions," cannot be imagined, any more than the Homilies, to have emanated from a discarded schismatical party.

Only by means of organisation could the principle of catholicism, or Christian universalism, be practically carried out. The idea may be said to have originated with St. Paul; but the spiritual universalism which he contemplated was very unlike that afterwards realised. A religion free to all was, of course, very different from a dominion binding on all; and yet from the necessary variety of thought and circumstance among men, the one could not be durably established without the other. The machinery through which catholicism eventually attained form and stability was of Jewish derivation, based on Levitical analogies; and the earliest confutations of heresy proceeded from writers of Judaical leanings.[2] But with new circumstances there arose new antipathies and combinations; and as Jew-Christianity renounced Ebionitism, so the catholicised Paulinists who adopted the name of Peter and the Petrine establishment of the Roman Church,[3] were induced to signalise their aversion to the Gnostic errors regarded not unreasonably by many as consequences of Paulinism, by pronouncing their condemnation in the name of St. Paul himself. The earliest denunciation of

[1] See Heinichen's note to Euseb. Hist. Eccl. vii. 19, as to the reliquary "throne" of James. Vol. ii. p. 412, otto.

[2] *E.g.* Hegesippus, Justin, and the Homilies.

[3] Such seems to be the most probable meaning of the symbolical word "Babylon," n 1 Pet. v. 13; a common Christian nickname for Rome. Comp. Rev. xvii. 5.

heretics in the New Testament (considered as deserters of the church), occurs in the Pastoral Letters;[1] and the tactics recommended by the writer are strict adherence to traditional teaching, combined with well-ordered government, and a provision for continuous transmission of the faith.[2] The Epistles of Ignatius,[3] a pseudonymous writing nearer in date, probably, to the end of the second century than the commencement, contain, in connection with a violent tirade against heresy,[4] the first distinct mention of a "catholic church."[5] The writer proclaims that autonomy or independence of Christianity as a substantive and new form of religion, without a consciousness of which no proper church could have existed; but advocates this Pauline principle in a hierarchical sense. His grand panacea for all ecclesiastical evil is to "stick to the bishop." Nothing must be done without the bishop's approval; where he is there is the church. He represents Christ, as Christ represents God; he is

[1] Titus iii. 10; comp. Schwegler's N. Zeit. ii. 149. [2] 2 Tim. ii. 2.

[3] It is difficult to conceive the incompatible traits ascribed to Ignatius to have ever coexisted in a living person. He is a caricatured St. Paul, and his contrasted pride and meekness far transcend even the paradox (2 Cor. vi. 10) of the Christian character. The "God-inspired" man ("θεοφορος"), deeply versed in the secrets of angels and archangels—mysteries so sublime and so far beyond his reader's comprehension, that he is afraid they may be choked by hearing them (Trallians, ch. v.)—is yet so humble that he feels scarcely to deserve to suffer; to hear his own praises is torture to him; he aspires only to be the pupil of his pupils; he is the "filth" and offscouring of the world. (Comp. 1 Cor. iv. 13.) Conducted on his way to execution by a party of rude and cruel soldiers (Rom. ch. v.), he nevertheless has leisure and leave to receive deputations, to give exhortations, and to write elaborate theological treatises; and in enthusiasm of the martyr far outdoing St. Paul (see Rom. xv. 30, 31) or even Jesus (Matt. xxvi. 39), protests against any possible exertions of his friends to procure his release, earnestly entreating all who love him for God's sake not to interpose between him and the wild animals who are to tear him to pieces. The tradition about Ignatius is evidently taken from the letters, or suggested by them; and cannot, therefore, supply a collateral guarantee for their genuineness. The story is in many respects irreconcilable with history; the persecution scarcely agrees with the mild character of Trajan, who, in his letter to Pliny, seems scarcely to have made up his mind how to treat the Christians; and the incident of landing at Puteoli on the way to Rome, instead of the nearest port, Brundusium, is evidently taken from the life of St. Paul. The state of the episcopacy indicates an age much later than Trajan, and so does the heresy combated in the letters, a docetic Gnosis (see Ephes. xviii. 20; Trall. ix.; Smyrnæ iii.), which, according to Hegesippus, did not venture to show itself openly until after the time of the Bishop of Antioch. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iii. 32; Hilgenfeld, Ap. Vater, p. 240, &c.

[4] This writer dissuades from strange doctrines and Jewish fables, Magnes. viii. 10, &c. He calls the Gnostics "mad dogs," "wolves," "backbiters," "impious workers," "beasts in human shape." Ephes. vii.; Philad. ii.; Smyrn. iv.

[5] Smyrnæ, ch. viii. Also mentioned about the same time in an epistle of the church of Smyrna in Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iv. 15.

the visible incarnation of the true "bishop of the soul;"[1] every one who is of God acts in unison with him; nothing is acceptable to God which has not the episcopal sanction, &c. The bishops, in short, are the visible representatives of the spiritual immanency of Christ in the churches, through whom his omnipresent aid is perceptibly distributed and apportioned to its members; so that adhesion to the bishop is absolutely essential to being a Christian.

The germ of the hierarchical idea, clearly defined for the first time in the Homilies, may be traced much earlier in the postulate of an unbroken traditional continuity made by Hegesippus, Hermas, and in early Petrinic legend. The tendency to centralisation belonged at first not so much to Christianity as to Judaism. Its earliest expression is perhaps to be found in the "seven angels" of the Apocalypse, representing the seven Asiatic churches, and indicating an effort to embody in concrete form the spiritual immanence of Christ in the several communities.[2] Of course, there could be no proper church establishment while men were looking eagerly for the dissolution of all things, and end of the world; but as the hope of a celestial Jerusalem receded, a tangible terrestrial kingdom came more prominently into view, armed with power to perpetuate its authority by suppressing irregular practices and teaching. Its form, as eventually established, was a complete reversal of the original constitution of the churches. The word bishop (επισκοπος) was originally an appellation used indiscriminately with presbyter and deacon,[3] implying a peculiarity of function, not the title of a specific dignity. Dignity could be little thought of in a small and often-persecuted community, expecting an immediate end of the world. The anticipation which made even marriage an inconvenient distraction,[4] and all sublunary considerations as nothing, must have severed the exercise of official authority from every usual motive of interest or ambition. These names were not at first denominations of rank, but generic terms applied interchangeably to the official leaders of the congregation,[5] generally consisting of its more "aged" members, who, as "inspectors" (or episcopi), were also, of course, deacons, *i. e.* "ministers" or public "servants;" the greatest among Chris-

[1] Ephes. ch. i.

[2] The "angels," says De Wette, Comment. p. 41, are the "Gemeingeist," or "geistige substanz der Gemeinde."

[3] "Diaconos."

[4] 1 Cor. vii. 29.

[5] Acts xx. 17 and 28; 1 Pet. v. 1, 2.

tians being, of course, the "servant of all."[1] It was natural that those, who, like the house of Stephanas,[2] were the "first fruits" or first converted, or, in other respects, qualified to take the lead, should receive deference and submission from the communities they served, and that this submission may have been approved and ratified by an Apostle;[3] but the language of St. Paul, who expressly allows Stephanas to have been self-elected, and who, in addressing the distracted church of Corinth offers only the most general advice in regard to discipline, forbids our supposing that the claims of the early Christian office-bearer had any other basis than the convenience and voluntary respect of the flock. Hence even an Apostle might be called servitor or "deacon,"[4] inasmuch as "deaconry" was synonymous with "ministry;" a bishopric was "διακονια της επισκοπης,"[5] a bishop, "διακονος λογου."[6] St. Paul mentions "helps and governments"[7] (*i. e.* abstract expressions for the diaconal or episcopal office), as some of the many diversified gifts or "charismata" of the "one spirit" poured out upon all Christians, and constituting a charge to be exercised discreetly, according to individual fitness and capacity, for the interests of all. The early "ministers" are said to have "served the flock of Christ in all lowliness and innocency, in peace and without self-interest;"[8] they were elected after the apostolic age by the notables or eminent men, with the concurrence of the congregation.[9] In the original democratic constitution[10] the first specific deacons were chosen by the congregation, or "whole multitude,"[11] their selection being acquiesced in, as of course, by the Apostles; and this general electoral right continued down to the time of Cyprian, when the distinction of clergy and laity had been definitively established. At first there was no such distinction. One of the fundamental ideas of Christianity was the universal priesthood of its members;[12] all the acts subsequently reserved to the clergy alone, as teaching[13] and administration of the sacraments, were in earlier times performed preferentially, indeed, by the

[1] Matt. xx. 26, 27; xxiii. 11. [2] 1 Cor. xvi. 15.
[3] Acts xiv. 23; Clem. Rom. ch. 42.
[4] Acts i. 17, 25; xx. 24; xxi. 19; Rom. xi. 13. [5] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. v. 1.
[6] Apost. Const. ii. 26. Irenæus, too, confounds the presbyters with the bishops, iii. 2, 3; iv. 26.
[7] 1 Cor. xii. 28. [8] Clem. to Corinth i. 44. [9] Ibid.
[10] Matt. xxiii. 8. [11] Acts vi. 3, 5, 6.
[12] Irenæ, iv. 8, 3; Stieren, p. 582; Tertull. de Exhort. Cast. ch. vii.
[13] The Epistle of Peter prefixed to the Homilies speaks of the office of teacher as self-constituted.

office-bearers, but by no means by them exclusively.[1] The word "clergy," as first used, did not imply any hierarchical usurpation, or any disparity in the laity; it was, like "deacon," a mere appellative of official "position," to which was gradually superadded the sense of precedency of rank, and ultimately the Levitical idea of separation of class. The laic was a non-official person, but, as a Christian, he was at any time competent to assume office. "Where three are gathered together, there," says Tertullian,[2] "is a church, even although they be laymen." Perhaps the earliest indication of a transition from the primitive collegiate authority of episcopi and diaconi to the monarchical episcopacy is to be found in Hermas;[3] its consummation appears in the letters of Ignatius, where, instead of the simple ecclesiastical constitution described in the Gospel,[4] we find a regular scale of official rank, the presbytery representing the collective authority of the Apostles, the bishop, without whom there can be no church, occupying the place of Christ or God. The last obstacle to episcopacy, as a paramount ecclesiastical authority, seems to have been a claim to primitive equality on the part of the presbyters, which in some quarters was not set aside till the end of the second century. Freedom generated endless heresies, hence the obvious danger which made it easy for the bishops to establish an absolute sway over men's consciences and creeds. A central government, under a single chief, was wanted by the church, just as the nominally theocratic, but really anarchical Jews, had demanded "a king to go before them and fight their battles." The spiritual union imagined by St. Paul thus became an external sovereignty, and the ideal "body of the Lord" was metamorphosed into an ecclesiastical corporation with a sacerdotal emperor at its head. It was the victory of the hierarchical over the congregational or democratic principle, in which the authority, before delegated by individuals to the community, and from the community to the minister, was theoretically reversed in the order of its course, and henceforth supposed to flow from above, determining the organisation of the many by the absolute will of one.

[1] Tertull. de Baptismo, ch. xvii.; Baur's Christenthum, 243; Ritschl, Altkatholische Kirche, pp. 375, 377.

[2] Exhort. Cast. ch. vii. [3] Simil. ix. 27. [4] Matt. xviii. 20.

3. *The Gospel of Mark.*

The Gospel of Mark may be singled out as especially the hierarchical one. It eminently displays the neutral and arbitrary character of the later New Testament literature. Tradition makes it a Petrinic writing, although the author was also a friend and companion of St. Paul; and it is said to have originally consisted of "memorials" of Peter's preaching at Rome, compiled by Mark either in the Apostle's lifetime, or, according to other accounts, after his death,[1] at the earnest solicitation of the hearers. According to Papias, it was not a methodical account of Christ's history and discourses, but a series of desultory memoranda of Petrinic "preachings" (*τα ὑπὸ Πετρου κηρυσσομενα*), supposed to have been delivered occasionally by the Apostle, in reply to the heretical doctrines of a certain false teacher preceding him. Whether this description can be made to tally with our present "Mark" seems more than doubtful. Baur at first attempted to explain the imputed irregularity[2] in the sense of deficiency, in other words, the epitomising character of the second Gospel, since, in point of arrangement, there is evidently no great difference between Matthew and Mark; but he afterwards admitted the explanation to be untenable, and that the description, in all probability, applies to the "*κηρυγμα Πετρου*," or to some similar composition akin to the Clementina, confounded by mistake with our present Gospel. Irenæus, who had the latter before him, feels compelled to assign to it a later origin than that assumed by tradition;[3] and, indeed, it is generally admitted that the older evangelical sources were Palestinian, whereas internal evidence[4] as well as external testimony prove the origin of Mark to have been Roman. The prior condition of this Roman Gospel must, if the tradition be reliable, have been very different from that which we possess at present. Instead of Petrine original (or ostensibly original) discourses, representing, perhaps, the controversy of ancient Roman Christianity with Paulinism, we have a simple Gospel narrative, from which controversy and extreme opinions are carefully expunged. The whole of Mark, except about twenty-five or twenty-seven verses, may be found in Matthew or Luke. This fact, added to

[1] Comp. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. ii. 15; iii. 39; and vi. 14; with Irenæ, Her. iii. 1.
[2] "*Ου μεντοι ταξει.*" Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iii. 39. [3] Ch. iii. 1.
[4] *E.g.* its Latin terms and idioms.

its compendious form, led to the supposition of its being the original synoptical text; but this is negatived by the peculiar variations, indicating later interpolation by awkward abbreviations or omissions. Thus in ch. i. 13, the ministration of the angels is left unexplained, and the moral purpose of the temptation lost sight of; the omission of the verses Matt. v. 3, 4, between Mark x. 36 and 37, destroys the meaning and connection; ch. xii. 34, is unintelligible until accounted for by a comparison with Matt. xxii. 46, or Luke xx. 40. The substitution of "Mary's" son, the carpenter,[1] for Matthew's "son of the carpenter,"[2] indicates a more matured stage of Christological theory than that of the genealogies; and the alteration of the "coming of the son of man" in Matthew[3] into the "coming of the kingdom of God,"[4] seems to point to the advanced stage of thought at which the disappointment of Christian expectation in its earlier sense was thought to be made good by the visible establishment of the church. It has been noticed that Mark's general neglect (except in one instance[5]) of Old Testament citations, seems to denote the view which made Christianity not only the new religion, but the only religion; and that its pretensions to esoteric mystery,[6] its denunciation of sacrifice,[7] its omission of the genealogies and emphatic assertion of the divine origin of Christ,[8] betray affinity with the Clementine Homilies. Mark's Gospel has an especially practical and catholic character. Its assumed author, while supposed to be on terms of affectionate intimacy with Paul, Sylvanus, &c.,[9] was particularly the companion and interpreter of that Apostle whom the Roman Church, from traditional congruity of sentiment, had early adopted to supply the place of its unknown founder. It seems to address an already organised community, whose union it would secure by avoiding every uncalled-for allusion to controverted problems, seeking conciliation, not by direct combinations of disputed points of doctrine, but by the safer plan of omitting everything likely to excite discussion or to revive the irritation of party feeling. It leaves out, often with no little injury to the connection, all the Jew-Christian exclusiveness of Matthew,[10] and the obtrusive Paulinism of Luke; and, though admitting to the Jews a certain priority of claim,[11] treats the

[1] Mark vi. 3. [2] Ch. xiii. 55. [3] Ch. x. 23; xvi. 28. [4] Mark ix. 1.
[5] Ch. i. 2. [6] Ch. iv. 11. [7] Ch. xii. 33. [8] Ch. i. 1.
[9] 1 Pet. v. 13; Col. iv. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 11. [10] Ch. x. 5, 6; xv. 24; xix. 28.
[11] Ch. vii. 27.

Christian privilege and "*church*"[1] as the admitted property of "all nations." There is no partial reservation in favour of the "lost sheep of Israel" on one side, nor any vindictive condemnation of them on the other;[2] all cause of offence is carefully avoided, and the politic directions of the Pastoral Epistle[3] to stick to the practical, and to avoid theological controversy, are faithfully observed. So far is this carried, that the peculiar encomiums elsewhere bestowed on Peter[4] are suppressed, as if from a feeling that it was enough to possess the authority of St. Peter's own words,[5] without making him enact the ungraceful part of his own panegyrist.[6] The result of this conciliatory and conventional tendency is a Gospel deficient, perhaps, in dogmatical interest and marked peculiarities; but the very absence of peculiarities is interesting, as denoting a period when agitating controversies had ceased, and when unity was thought to be well earned at the price of insipidity.

4. *The Episcopate of Victor.*

The few remaining memorials of the Roman Church of the second century contain indications of several curious revolutions of feeling; but the great change was the transition from Jewish to independent Christianity; from the sphere of national privilege to that of a universal salvation. A reaction seems to have occurred in some circles towards Judaism in opposition to Marcion; but the general tendency (exhibited even in the Homilies) was towards hierarchical universalism; which, if, in some respects, requiring the sacrifice of primitive freedom to the necessities of order and government, made ample amends by repeated instances of abandonment of illiberal and inconvenient restrictions. This expansive, yet, at the same time, tyrannical aspect of the church, is especially conspicuous in the age of the Roman bishop Victor, an epoch seemingly exemplifying a state of things frequently met with under arbitrary government, the combination of strict rule

[1] Ch. xi. 17, where the words "of all nations" are evidently inserted with a purpose. Comp. xvi. 20.
[2] Matt. iii. 9; viii. 10, 12; xxi. 31, 43, omitted.
[3] Titus iii. 9. [4] Matt. xvi. 17, &c.
[5] See especially the words in 2 Pet. i. 12–15; a late epistle, attesting the genuineness of Mark's Gospel.
[6] This excuse for St. Mark's silence is given by Eusebius, Dem. Evang. iii. 5.

with popular concession. It was at this juncture that occurred the celebrated dispute about the Passover between the Roman and Asiatic churches, which was partly a struggle for privilege and priority between rival establishments, partly the old feud of Paulinism with Judaism. It originated under the Roman bishop Anicetus, between whom and Polycarp the controversy ended where it began, neither choosing to concede the point at issue.[1] Under Victor it was resumed with greater asperity on both sides. The Asiatics, headed by Polycrates Bishop of Ephesus, claimed the authority of John and the other Apostles in favour of the ancient practice of eating the Passover, according to Jewish custom, and the Old Testament, on the 14th day of the month; devoting the 15th or following day, to the "remembrance" of Christ's death, and appealing, as we are told by Apollinaris, not to John's Gospel, but to Matthew's, in confirmation of their proceedings; whereas the western churches fasted on the 14th or Passover day, in commemoration of the crucifixion, according to the Pauline axiom that Christ was himself the Christian's Passover.[2] The "Apostolical Constitutions," a work compiled by a Catholic writer out of ancient, and often very indifferently assorted materials, supplies collateral literary evidence of the prior occurrence of this doctrinal transition in the Church of Rome; for, whereas in its present form[3] the book distinctly rejects the Jewish Passover, the sect of the Audiani, according to Epiphanius,[4] quoted it to justify their own contradictory practice of Quartodeciman observance; and there is equal inconsistency arising out of a double authorship in frequent instances of stipulation for Sabbath observance, while elsewhere[5] Sabbatising is renounced, and the Christian Sunday alone permitted. It may appear strange that Victor should have considered a difference seemingly so trivial sufficient reason for excommunicating all the churches of Asia, which he actually did, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the western bishops. Irenæus, among others, strongly urged the impropriety of cutting off that large section of the Christian world, which, after all, had only too faithfully observed an ancient custom; adverting also to the

[1] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. v. 24.

[2] 1 Cor. v. 7. It need scarcely be observed that St. John's authorship of the fourth Gospel, which makes Christ the passover, no "bone of which is to be broken," is utterly irreconcilable with the Asiatic tradition.

[3] Ch. v. 17. [4] Hær. lx. 10, 11, 14. [5] *E.g.* v. 15.

fact, that preceding rulers of the church, though they did not themselves "*observe*," had by no means held it necessary to renounce relations of amity with those who did. It is clear that at this time observance of the Jewish Passover was generally considered to be, what Tertullian expressly calls it, a covert return to Judaism; this is evidently the footing on which the church rested its subsequent denunciations of it;[1] and the decree of Victor may be regarded as the formal disclaimer of all those relics of Orientalism which, though formerly overlooked as unimportant, it had become absolutely necessary to repudiate, in order to vindicate the independent authority of Rome. If ever the Roman Church was to realise those claims to supremacy which it appears already to have entertained, it was indispensible that, both in discipline and dogma, it should make good its ground by a definitive disclaimer of the pretensions of its rivals. The amalgamation of parties had already gone so far, and the Roman pontiff was so strengthened by the disciplinal and doctrinal coalition represented in legend by the reconcilement of Paul and Peter, that he was already able "to bind and to loose," and "to excommunicate dissent." The controversy between the churches was carried on, not on the ground of what was right, but of what was apostolical and ancient; each appealed to the legitimate succession and relative importance of its members. Polycrates pointed to the Christian heroes, from the Apostles downward, who had bequeathed their bones to the soil of Asia; from John, who "rested on the Lord's bosom," and wore the priestly diadem; and Philip, who then slept at Hierapolis, with his two aged virgin daughters. "Why," he exclaims, "need I mention Polycarp, and Thraseus, and Sagaris, all of them martyrs, reposing at Ephesus, at Smyrna, or Laodicea; the blessed Papirius too, and Melito the eunuch who rests at Sardis, awaiting the episcopate from heaven when he shall rise from the dead? All these observed the 14th day according to the Gospel, deviating in no respect, but following the rule of the faith. And I, Polycrates, who am the least of you, have ever, according to the traditions of my relatives, some of whom preceded me in office (for there were seven of my relatives bishops, and I am the eighth), have ever observed the day when the 'people' (*i. e.* the Jews) put away the use of leaven. I, therefore, brethren, being now sixty-five

[1] Schwegler's N. Zeit. ii. 210, n.; Montanismus, 196, n.

years, old in the Lord, having conferred with the brethren throughout the world, and consulted the whole of the sacred Scripture (*i. e.* the Old Testament), am not scared at the threats of those who would intimidate me, since greater than I have said that 'we must obey God rather than men.'"

5. *Montanism.*

About the same time occurred, after some vacillation, the breach of the Roman Church with the Montanists. These were enthusiastic votaries of the old school, principally Asiatics, who carried the primitive maxims and feelings to what now appeared to be an inconvenient excess. They were the pietists or "latter-day saints" of the second century, whose tenets appeared exaggerated, simply because they had ceased to harmonise with the advance of the age. We know from the New Testament that the protracted postponement of the long-expected "second coming" led to scepticism and levity, cessation of faith producing laxity in morals.[1] Montanism was a reactionary movement against increasing worldliness, a revival of ancient faith and discipline. It proclaimed more emphatically than ever the approaching end, the coming Messiah, the judgment and dissolution of the world. It enforced an austerity of morals suited to such circumstances,[2] and claimed the spiritual gifts which were to be "poured out on all flesh in the latter days." All this was evidently but a return to the Apocalyptic eschatology, the rigid observance and spiritual claims of the early church. The love of many had been chilled, but firm believers who "endured to the end," considered the final catastrophe to be nearer in proportion to the prolongation of their suspense. "What a spectacle," exclaims the Montanist Tertullian, "shall I soon behold! The Lord himself, indubitable, triumphant! How shall I rejoice, how exult, when I shall see so many kings said to have been already received up into heaven, groaning with Jove and his associates at the bottom of the abyss—when I behold the judges and persecutors of the name of the Lord melting in fires more cruel than those which they kindled for the Christians!" The prophetess Maximilla is said to have announced, "after me no more prophesying, but the end." The

[1] 2 Pet. iii. 3, seq. [2] Comp. 2 Pet. iii. 11; Heb. x. 25.

Montanists were ardent Chiliasts, fanatically devoted to the external materialistic form of Christian idealism which seems to have been still very generally prevalent.[1] They painted the details of the approaching millennium in the liveliest colours, and while Catholicism had already limited its aspirations to the prolongation of its worldly interests,[2] perpetually prayed in a millennarian sense, "thy kingdom come!" Priscilla, another Montanist prophetess, but whose raptures were by her adversaries interpreted as a demoniacal possession, pretended to have had a vision of Christ, who pointed out to her the exact spot on which the heavenly Jerusalem was to descend. A state of eager expectation, acting on ardent temperaments, naturally favoured the development of prognostication and prophesying. All Christians were gifted with the Spirit, and spirituality and prophecy were almost the same thing.[3] This charisma, long forfeited by the Jews, is claimed by Justin and Irenæus as having passed, with other Jewish privileges, to the Christians;[4] and the names of its successive recipients are commemorated, Agabus, Judas, Silas, the prophetic daughters of Philip, Ammias and Quadratus of Philadelphia. Through these the gift was transmitted to the Montanists, who enjoyed the plenitude of inspiration reserved for "the latter days." They assumed on this score to be, like the Gnostics, distinguished above other persons as "Pneumatici" or Spiritualists. To them are sometimes ascribed all the apocalyptic writings of early Christianity, Hermas, the Fourth Book of Esdras, and the Sibylline oracles, their spiritual claim as pietists and prophets nearly coinciding with that of the authors of those works. The prophet had always been considered as speaking, not his own words, but those of inspiration, as being the passive organ or "medium" of the Deity; hence Montanus, as a vehicle of the divine, became identified with the power he represented, which, "as a plectrum, struck upon the cords of the human soul." Tertullian describes a prophetess or weird sister resembling the mesmeric clairvoyantes of the present day, who, seized with ecstasy during church worship, seemed to converse with angels or with the Lord himself, divined what was passing in people's minds, and prescribed medicines to those consulting her.[5] According to Tertullian, everything later in

[1] Justin, Tryph. ch. lxxx. p. 276, otto.
[2] "Oramus—pro rerum quiete, pro morâ finis." Tertul. Apologeticus, ch. xxxix.
[3] 1 Cor. xiv. 37. [4] Tryph. ch. lxxxii.
[5] Tertull. de Anim. ch. ix.; Irenæ, Hær. ch. v. 6.

order of time is better, more intense, and more God-like; so that as the day of doom approached nearer and nearer, the effulgence of spiritual illumination became ever more penetrating and brilliant, and the revelation of Christ was eclipsed by the maturer one of the Paraclete. The Paraclete was sent to promote that perfection of discipline which human mediocrity could not at first support; for as nature grows and ripens, so also does "justice," or the moral character of man. "In his rudimentary condition he worshipped a God of fear; the law and the prophets were his infancy; in the gospel he advanced to adolescence; his maturity was now provided for by the Paraclete."[1]

The qualification most insisted on under this last or "Paracletic" dispensation was purity of life. Man, as the temple of the Holy Spirit, should himself become holy by bringing his body more and more into subjection, by breaking off all connection with the fading world. The results of the theory were exhibited in austere rules as to fasts, celibacy, and martyrdom, requirements which certainly were not novelties, but only a revival of ancient fervour. The church had stooped to an obsequious alliance with the world, sometimes even giving money to obtain immunity from persecution. A strong reaction to primitive devotedness now exceeded in its ascetical requirements not only the righteousness of Scribes and Pharisees, but even that of Jesus and the Apostles. Christ had repealed much that had been permitted by Moses on account of Israelitish hardness of heart; and many allowances conceded to the weakness of the flesh by him were now withdrawn by the Holy Spirit. A Montanist in Origen claims the merit of virgin purity as a "Nazarite of God, drinking no wine." The law of God and of morality was, indeed, always the same; but consideration for human ignorance and frailty had relaxed the severity which now in the ends of the world it had become necessary to enforce. Hardness of heart prevailed to the time of Christ; even then men were unable to bear the extirpation of their fleshly propensities. It was necessary that even this last weakness should cease, that the flesh should become wholly subservient to the spirit. The Paracletic revelation was, in short, that maturity of the genuine Christian sentiment, in which its original ascetical requirements to forsake father and mother, all sublunary cares and relations, were fully carried out, and in which the moral consciousness wholly abandoned the world to take refuge in itself.

[1] Tertull. de Virg. Vel. ch. i.

6. *Severance of the Church from Montanism.*

Montanism had much in common with Gnosis. Both were based on individual consciousness of elevated sentiment and Divine inspiration; both asserted the ultimate victory of spirit over matter, and indulged in views ranging beyond the actual into the past and future. But Montanism was only the Christian feeling and Christian Messiah theory intensified; Gnosis advanced beyond positive Christianity towards free speculation. One was latitudinarianism of idea; the other, exaltation of sentiment: Montanism exemplified the extreme tendencies of the Christian life; Gnosis aimed at an intellectual development of Christian theory. Neither extreme was compatible with the conventional moderation and absolute rule of an established church. Gnosticism was clearly irreconcilable with ecclesiastical instincts in its tendency to rationalise and generalise, to raise Christianity above the range of popular apprehension, and to merge its plain meaning in philosophical ideas. Though far from being really free, it was yet too free and independent for church acceptance. Its docetism, or the making Christ an ideal being, the mere symbol of a conception, was at variance with tradition; and by viewing salvation as an emancipation of the spirit, a transcendent operation within the mind, it left the human appearance of Christ unaccounted for, and the existence of a church unmeaning. It is true that the universalistic tendencies of Gnosis, and its claims to spiritual insight and infallibility, were necessary ingredients of church success. But the latitude required by Catholicity in its corporate capacity, could not be conceded to individuals; and the expansion it permitted was not allowed to proceed to the extent of Gnosis, in which positive Christianity was dissipated and lost. The Jewish theory of a special salvation, proportionably modified, was far more agreeable to the general feeling than that Gnostic independence, in which all principle was deserted for a wild reverie on the problems of the Cosmos. Montanism had less of apparent heterodoxy than Gnosis. It implied no new form of doctrine, nor, strictly speaking, even of discipline. The most eminent Christian teachers of early times were more or less attached to it, as Melito, Irenæus, Hippolytus, Justin, Athenagoras, Tertullian. The novelty was really on the side of its opponents, who, advanced beyond the past, wanted a new

name for stationary or reactionary tendencies. Belief in the continuance of divine revelation combined with an ascetical morality had been general, and the expectation of Christ's immediate return to judge the earth had been a prominent tenet of his followers ever since his death. Chiliasm, too, was a common mark of Jewish Christianity; it was held by almost all the early Christians,[1] and the church, in condemning it, condemned its own doctrinal antecedents. But Montanism, though containing nothing new, contained much that was effete and incompatible with the practical wants of the age. While Christianity clung to its idea of an immediate end, it could not obtain a firm footing among secular institutions. The fluctuating condition of faith and discipline made it more and more necessary, if it were to last, that its members should be organised and its faith defined; that it should have a code and a government. The seat of government was naturally Rome; but Rome could not tolerate a doctrine which made a "new Jerusalem" its heaven; nor could the independent appropriation of spiritual gifts by lay individuals be allowed by a church claiming in its corporate capacity alone the spiritual authority implying the exclusive salvation of its members and infallibility of its decrees. We are not particularly informed on what grounds Praxeas succeeded in persuading the Roman bishop,[2] who was at first disposed to deal amicably with the Asiatic churches, to recall letters of pacification already issued, and to desist from recognising the "Charismata;" whether it was the irregular enthusiasm of the Montanist prophets, the part they took in the Passover controversy, their repugnance to hierarchical authority, or all these together. It is clear, however, that here, as in the Passover dispute, interests of vital importance were thought to be at stake, involving the very existence of Christianity and the church. The controversy, so far as it can be made out, seems to have been an episode of the important revolution already mentioned, which changed primitive Christianity into Catholicity. The points at issue were the incompatible assertion of autonomy on one side, and hierarchical supremacy on the other, the latter involving the disuse of inapplicable irrational tenets. To the pretensions of extra-

[1] *E.g.* Cerinthus, Papias, Justin, Irenæus, and many others, down to the "Refutation of the Allegorists" by the Egyptian bishop Nepos in the third century. (Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iii. 28; vii. 24.)

[2] Probably Victor or Eleutherus.

ordinary prophetic gifts, Catholicism replied that "the law and the prophets were till John;" in other words, that the old prophecy had ceased with the old dispensation. It exposed in bolder terms than those used by St. Paul in his reproof of the fanatical Corinthians, the absurdities arising out of the old theory of holy frenzy; since it was impossible that those who were really under the influence of the Holy Spirit should lose their senses, or be capable of instructing others when ignorant or mad themselves. The Christian faith, it was said, depended not on meats and drinks, nor was a spare diet essential to evince the love of God. The Montanists were accused of "Galatising," *i. e.* Judaising like the Galatians; they were also "quartodecimans," or partisans of the Jewish side on the Passover question.[1] They exacted a purity and abstinence inconsistent with ordinary feeling; and the church, which could only become really universal by conforming to human wants, was obliged to repress and regulate the overstrained and impracticable pretensions of its members.[2] But it could not condemn the Montanists without condemning itself. The church claimed to be holy as well as catholic or universal; yet to make it universal was to open an asylum for the infamous, and practically to allow its impurity. A universal church could not be altogether a holy one; unless, indeed, a distinction were allowed between the visible and invisible, the empirical and ideal churches, a distinction not obvious, and which the visible church, of course, could not safely admit. The latter met the difficulty by appealing to its prerogative, its authority "to bind and to loose," or to unlock heaven to penitents. The plea of ecclesiastical authority was opposed to the scruples of individual consciences. The general difference came for decision in the form of a controversy as to the power claimed by the bishops to absolve from deadly sin committed after baptism. The first Christians were inflexible in this respect,[3] and the Montanists only maintained the ancient rigour. However, the Roman bishop, Zephyrinus, issued a

[1] Schwegler, Nachap. Zeit. ii. 216, 217.

[2] Ancient Christianity condemned second marriages as a specious form of adultery (Athenag. Leg. p. 33.); the church, according to Epiphanius (Hær. pp. 48, 49), recommended abstinence, but did not insist on it; it made due allowances for human frailty.

[3] See Heb. vi. 4, seq.; x. 26; xii. 17. The ancient writing called the "Shepherd," supposes all opportunity of repentance to cease from the moment of the constitution of the church. (Vis. ii. 2; comp. iii. 5.)

peremptory edict, authorising absolution;[1] an edict which Tertullian calls "monstrous," insufferable, and more worthy of the stews, than of the purity of the spouse of Christ. It is at least singular that the church should have commenced its career with so marked a concession to worldliness as was implied in the proclamation of a principle akin to that of indulgences. That the dispute, though quieted for a time, was not satisfactorily settled, is proved by its recurrence, as in the instances of the Novatians and other schismatic disciplinarians, whom Catholic writers are often puzzled to distinguish from their own monks, being in the awkward position of having either to admit the crookedness of church policy, or to condemn in the Montanists the very tenets substantially countenanced by themselves.[2]

7. *Scripture and Tradition.*

In order to maintain order and uniformity in the only sense in which, in an actual establishment, it seemed possible to secure these objects, it became more and more obvious that the church must have a definite standard of doctrine to appeal to. All parties had long been accustomed to refer to Scripture; but they were not agreed as to what was Scripture, or how it was to be interpreted. Each accused the other of subornation and forgery; each found in the contemporary pseudonymous literature evidence suited to its purposes; and Tertullian exhibits in his own person the loose way in which argument was conducted, quoting for "Scripture" at one time the very book which at another he scornfully rejects as apocryphal. It was impossible to make any conclusive appeal to canonical Scripture when the canon had no existence. The floating literature of the day had no authentic stamp. Books were scarce, and few were able to read them. Those used in some communities were thought inadmissible by others; and there was always a large intermediate class of "antilegomena," or disputed works.[3] Eusebius tells us[4] that the Apostles expressed themselves in vulgar

[1] "Ego et mœchiæ et fornicationis delicta pœnitentiâ functis dimitto."—Tertull. de Pudicitiâ, ch. 1.

[2] Schwegler, Montanismus, p. 238.

[3] See Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iii. 25; vi. 12, &c.

[4] Hist. Eccl. iii. 24.

language, and knew little of the art of composition; that even the ablest of them, St. Paul, wrote only a few short epistles; and he might have added, that for a long time even these shared the unpopularity of their author, and were seldom noticed except to be contradicted. A divine revelation could not be secured to later generations unless it were written; but the first disciples, who expected an immediate end of the world, had no motive, even if they had the ability, to undertake a seemingly useless task. It would have appeared absurd to confine within written paragraphs the free overflowings of the spirit; and those who came immediately after them, Papias, Polycarp, and Hegesippus, found it less profitable to consult books than to make personal inquiries of those who had associated with the disciples and professed to recollect their statements.[1] Writing was only resorted to as a subsidiary expedient when the "living voice" was absent or extinguished; and since Christianity seemed only a new phase of Judaism, the Old Testament sufficed for almost every purpose of reference; Justin[2] even declaring the gospel to be only a restoration of the law, and its true teachers to be the prophets.[3] The construction of a New Testament canon was the fruit of the controversies which showed the want of it; an independent literature accompanying the consciousness of an independent religion, which became more determinate and precise in proportion to the necessity of defining its limits against aggression. But heretics appealed not without effect[4] to Scriptures of their own, or to readings which they asserted to be the more ancient and genuine; and their opponents, finding literary controversy unsafe ground, fell back to the old resource of tradition, declaring with Tertullian,[5] "Ergo non ad Scripturas provocandum est." In short, it was necessary to test Scripture by means of doctrine, before doctrine could be established by the evidence of Scripture. The argument was a begging of the question; Tertullian characteristically laying it down that heretics cannot be Christians, because heretical doctrines cannot be

[1] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iii. 39; Irenæus, Hær. iii. 3, 4.

[2] Justin assigns only a subsidiary authority to his Apostolical "Memorials;" and even the "Apostolical Constitutions" (i. 5) refer primarily to the Old Testament for scripture evidence, making the "εναγγελιον" secondary evidence only as a "συμπληρωμα."

[3] Schwegler's N. Zeit. ii. 196.

[4] Tertull. de Præscr. ch. xv.

[5] Ibid. ch. xiv. and xix.

derived from Christ![1] Heretics might have replied that they repudiated the denomination; and might have added, that even orthodox tradition was a precarious test, being in many instances palpably absurd and false.[2] They, however, preferred to accept the proffered criterium,[3] only they claimed a hearing for traditions verifying their own opinions. These they endeavoured to connect with the most ancient times, declaring them to have been faithfully handed down through Glaukias or Theodas from Paul, Peter, or Jesus. They pretended that the Apostles themselves were not always in the right, instancing the dispute between Paul and Peter at Antioch;[4] they even went so far as to say that heterogeneous elements had been mixed with Christianity by its Founder, who sometimes uttered the promptings of an intermediary Æon, and that in other cases the Apostles had imperfectly comprehended and incorrectly recorded his statements. The Fathers replied by pointing to the comparatively modern date of Gnosticism and the differences among its teachers, in advantageous comparison with which stood the uniform assent of the churches represented by the bishops and presbyters to whose care they were committed by the Apostles, and from whom they received the transmitted truth derived by the Apostles from Christ, and by Christ from God. If, therefore, it were asked what Christ really revealed and the Apostles preached, recourse must be had to the churches founded by them: Achaians might repair to Corinth, Asiatics to Ephesus, Macedonians to Thessalonica or Philippi; as to the western Christians, whither should they look for truth unless in the bosom of that glorious church founded by the two great Apostles and martyrs, Paul and Peter, in which apostolical tradition had been faithfully handed down from the very beginning?[5] "In short," says Tertul-

[1] De Præscr. ch. xxxvii.

[2] Clemens, for instance, avows that he suppresses many traditions "lest he should put a sword into the hands of children;" yet he repeats the story of John's having inserted his hand into the dead body of Christ without feeling any resistance; and informs us that the nutriment taken by the Saviour was wholly absorbed without fæces (pp. 538 and 1009: ed. Potter). The former of these stories occurs in the "Hypotyposes," although Cassiodorus professes to have purged them of discreditable matter.

[3] Irenæ. Hær. iii. 2, 1.

[4] The church evaded this objection by pleading that the Peter who disputed with Paul at Antioch was not the Apostle, but another person. See Euseb. Hist. Eccl. i. 12.

[5] Irenæ. Hær. iii. 2, 2; Tertull. de Præscr. xxi. and xxxvi.

lian, "the Apostle himself tells us that it is better to leave heresy to itself;[1] to argue with a heretic is impossible, since he refuses to accept our premises, and already deserves castigation on that very account."[2]

A general reference to tradition seemed at first to supply the required standard of uniformity, inasmuch as the oscillations of the Christian consciousness were confined within certain limits. These, in the conflict with heresy, became more defined, and thus arose the first outlines of a rule of faith,[3] consisting of short sentences adapted for repetition at baptism, and antithetically arranged against heretical errors, which at length settled down into "the Apostles' creed." Yet the appeal to tradition was, after all, only a reference to opinion, a summons to the *vox populi* to supply the means of self-verification and correction.[4] Originally a conservative expedient employed against the Gnostics, it might be made to serve equally well the opposite purposes of innovation and development;[5] and thus be carried to an extreme subverting its purpose, and conceding all that Gnosticism wanted. The Clementine Homilies, for instance, assert the infallibility of tradition independently of any outward determining test or objective condition, in the absolute sense of a universal or ideal certainty derived through some unexplained channel[6] from the beginning of the world. For the fixed external standard of historical tradition, it thus substitutes a principle of ideal interpretation quite as arbitrary as that of the Gnostics.[7] The church avoided this dangerous latitudina-

[1] 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4; Tit. iii. 10, 11.

[2] De Præscr. xvi. Valesius says that the church for ever retains the divine charisma (or gift) of Gnosis; but that heretics, although they usurp the name, cannot have the thing, "because they are not of the church: ("cum alieni sunt ab ecclesiâ Dei.")

[3] See Irenæ. Hær. i. 10; Tertull. de Præscr. xiii.; Adv. Prax. ii.; Origen de Princip. sec. Rufin. i. 4.

[4] "Quod apud multos unum invenitur non est inventum sed traditum." Tertull. de Præs. xxviii.

[5] Bishop Stephen, in his controversy with Cyprian, says, "Nihil innovandum nisi quod traditum est."

[6] "τα απ' αιωνος εν κρυπτῳ αξιοις παραδιδομενα." Hom. iii. 19.

[7] This free and easy principle is certainly countenanced in the early Christian literature; the author of Hebrews, for instance, finds in the Old Testament account of Melchisedek a reflection of his own Christian idea of an eternal high-priest, although the particular on which the comparison is founded, *i. e.* the having no father or mother, is a gratuitous inference suggested by the hypothesis it is meant to support. The same may be said when, attempting to show that the ancient Hebrew worthies found favour with God through their faith, he is obliged, in the case of Enoch, to assume the fact which was to be proved, and to make the favour

rian postulate by continuing to regard personal relationship or connection as the best attainable security for exactitude of doctrine, of taking for its rule, not tradition in general, but that guaranteed as legitimate [1] by the authority of the bishop. The principle was thus inseparably interwoven with that of Episcopacy. Had the bishops been really the immediate successors of the Apostles, there might have been some reason, however slight, for trusting the Episcopal warrant. Unfortunately for the church, this cannot be proved.

The official leaders of the infant church were not bishops as usually understood, but "presbyters" or "elders;" and the Fathers, in their traditional recitals, almost invariably appeal to some "blessed presbyter," in order to connect themselves with the Apostles. Some idea of the way in which tradition grew may be found from involuntary patristic admissions. Its general mode of propagation is exemplified by Papias, whose belief, in happy indifference to the usual tests of historical credibility, is implicitly guided by the estimation in which the reputed author of a story was held by the church. If an "elder" said so and so, no possibility of mistake is for a moment suspected; although we are not assured that the "elder" had any authority whatever for the particular communication, or that it may not have been wholly gratuitous. Irenæus, in his eagerness to maintain tradition, confounds the whole time anterior to Gnostic "innovation" in one grand "Apostolical period;" he makes immediate "disciples of the Apostles" out of a presbyter of the middle of the second century,[2] and Papias, who expressly disclaimed the honour;[3] striving to obliterate the chronological interval by preposterously exaggerating apostolical longevity,[4] and claiming an impossible antiquity for his own informants. Clement of Alexandria coolly makes his own compilations into a Gnostic "paradosis" derived from the Apostles; and we are tempted to ask whether the offensive matter which, according to Photius,[5] he tried in the Hypotyposes to verify from Scripture, and which

shown to Enoch the ground for assuming his faith. A writer who so unscrupulously makes Scripture a vehicle for propounding his own ideas, would hardly hesitate to publish congenial sentiments under a borrowed name.

[1] Sometimes even against stronger apostolical evidence, as in the passover-controversy between Victor and Polycrates, where the synoptical gospels were clearly overruled

[2] Irenæ. iv. 27, 1, and 32, 1. [3] Euseb. iii. 39. [4] Irenæ. v. 30, 3.
[5] P. 286, Höschl.

Cassiodorus undertook to expunge, were really Apostolical; whether his story of the just living in the sun,[1] his abortive attempts to conceal Scripture discrepancies,[2] or the explanations in midwifery communicated by the presbyter in Eclog. Proph. 50, are due to inspiration; or whether they are not rather to be classed with those fictions which, growing with the occasion like Falstaff's men in buckram, become at last too much even for the ostrich digestion of the commentators; for instance, the story of Judas, who having passed through the hanging recorded in Matthew, underwent several other deaths in compliance with the seeming requisitions of prophecy, being first ruptured by a fall, then victim to the dropsy,[3] which inflated him to such an extent, that his head was "larger than a chariot;" until at length this term of comparison, expressive of his size, was turned into the engine of his destruction, the illustrative chariot came into actual collision with his body, and he fell crushed by the weight of a metaphor. There are some expressions which seem to betray a consciousness on the part of Clemens of unfairness in indiscriminately claiming apostolical authority for the matter collected by him. In designating the primordial tradition by the name of apostolic "germs,"[4] he virtually admits the non-apostolical character of the matured story. The authentic nucleus is thus reduced to a minimum; apostolical sanction extends only to the Gnostic principle; and so far as Christian feeling had a tendency to spiritualism, the statement so limited may possibly be correct. But then if the Apostles sanctioned only the first hints and germs of traditional Gnosis, what becomes of the reliance claimed for the presbyters, or the pretended careful transmission of full-grown unadulterated accounts "from father to son" (παις παρα πατρος), which by their matured absurdity make all development impossible and superfluous? In short, it was impossible to admit any distinction between the superadded and the traditional without abandoning the whole argument; but Clemens does not choose to prejudice his own case by making a display of its weakness, and candidly allowing a discrepancy between the initial story and the "dropsical" proportions of the actual. If by any ingenious device or distortion of Scripture a particu-

[1] Eclog. Proph. lvi. [2] P. 1017, Potter.

[3] Probably inferred from Ps. cix. 18, of which ver. 8 is quoted in Acts. See Strauss, Leben Jesu, iii. 3, § 130.

[4] "σπερματα." Strom. i. 1; Potter, p. 323.

lar notion could be connected with a presumably apostolical dictum, the Fathers were confirmed in their belief that the Apostles actually possessed the "true Gnosis;" but the power of verifying and tracing it to its source belonged only to a favoured "few," because those only who, by means of allegory, had contrived to appropriate to others their own ideas, knew how to discover and recognise them. And it may well be asked, if such were the liberties taken when Christianity was in the hands of educated men well versed in Greek philosophy, what must have been the condition of the plastic impassioned age and unguarded opportunities of its infancy; what the credulity of those "babes" in intellect and "paupers in spirit," whose excited imaginations, rather than their memories, furnished the precarious traditional materials of gospel "history?"

8. *The Conflict with Paganism.*

The designation of the disciples as the "salt of the earth," bespeaks the feeling which eventually made Christianity a world-wide religion. The Fathers loved to dwell on the remarkable affinity between their faith and imperial power; how both came to maturity at the same time, and had ever coexisted with mutual advantage.[1] They even ventured to assert that the welfare of the State depended on Christianity, and that their prayers alone deferred the end of time, whose duration was prolonged mainly on their account.[2] The heathen did not reciprocate these advances; nor, indeed, were they consistent with what had been originally professed by the Christians. The latter, as may be seen in the Apocalypse, exhibited at first all the antisocial exclusiveness of Judaism. The very essence of Christianity was separation from the world, its ideas, its pleasures, and to a considerable extent its duties.[3] It stood aloof from society,[4] renounced solicitude for the morrow, and treated human authority as a commission from the devil,[5] the "prince of this world," who had absolutely nothing in Christ. It was, therefore, not true that Christianity really loved the world, or was in any very obvious sense the means of its preservation; on the contrary, it has been said with truth that it

[1] Euseb. iv. 26. [2] Tertull. Apol. ch. xxxii.; Justin, Apol. ii. 7.
[3] Hermas, Vis. i. 3, &c.; and the remonstrances in Rom. xiii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 13.
[4] See Matt. x. 16; xx. 25, 26; Luke vi. 22; John vii. 7; xv. 18; xvi. 33.
[5] Matt. iv. 8, 9; Hermas, Simil. i.; Barnabas, ch. ii.

had no inconsiderable influence in causing the downfall of the Roman Empire. With such tendencies it was naturally disliked. Its antipathy to the usual forms of public worship and social intercourse countenanced the suspicions generally attaching to a secret society, which made it appear to the most enlightened among the heathen as a dire superstition ("exitiabilis superstitio"), whose essential principle was hatred of the human race.[1] Hence the most atrocious charges found ready credence when brought against the Christians, whose general character was thought even by Tacitus to supersede the necessity of adducing evidence to justify their conviction. The Christian reply to this unjustifiable severity is the Apocalypse, which, little anticipating the historical realisation of Christ's kingdom of which Rome was to be the scene, denounces that city as the blood-stained murderess of the saints, and as the throne of Antichrist. And yet, notwithstanding this deep-rooted aversion and real incompatibility, of which the execution of the Founder of Christianity by a Roman official may be regarded as a presage, the despised and calumniated faith had an advocate in the bosoms of its individual adversaries which ever replenished its ranks. It was a mental refuge from calamity, instantly replacing by new associations and ideas all the then broken ties of moral and religious life. The increase of conversion, attested by the well-known letter of the younger Pliny, led to increased apprehension and persecution; and this again stimulated, among the educated especially, the tendency to conversion. It was no longer possible to ignore the new faith now openly exhibited before the world. And although the emperors, in the interests of state policy, disliked and affected to despise the theatrical avidity for martyrdom displayed by the Christians, it was, at least, impossible to conceive their devotedness to be inspired by the unworthy motives ascribed to them; and many even of the philosophers, whose distinctive character, according to the practical fashion of the day, was rather a life than a theory, were led, in admiration of what they saw, to go over to the practical "philosophy" of Christianity, their manner of life and general turn of thought as Christians continuing unchanged. These educated converts became the "apologists" of their newly-adopted faith, endeavouring by their writings to place it in a truer light before the world. The defence was

[1] Tacit. Ann. xv. 44; Tertull. Apol. ch. xxxvii.

addressed to Jews, Gentiles, philosophers, and politicians; showing first that the charges of gross immorality, if not altogether unfounded, were at least entirely opposed to Christian principle; and that, in justice, the misdeeds of a few ought not to be laid to the account of all.[1] It endeavoured to convince statesmen that, so far from being dangerous to civil government, Christianity, as now better understood and explained, was especially calculated to form good and obedient citizens; and that, it was wrong to hate those whose very name ("χρηστοι") showed them to be "good" men. The apologists pleaded that, instead of being repugnant to the best opinions of the day, their faith was in reality a recapitulation of them; and as they tried to convince Jews that Old Testament prophecy had been fulfilled, even to the most minute particulars, in the career of Jesus, so to Gentiles they declared that, instead of deserving reprobation as opposing the philosophy of the old world, Christianity had, for the first time, made its meaning clear and its warring theories consistent. The "Logos" doctrine was well adapted to this theory of amalgamation. The same "Word" which had been revealed in one direction to the Barbarians (or Jews), had also, it was said, communicated to the Greeks all that they possessed of true and rational; and consequently every one who at any time had lived rationally might be considered to have been Christian. The defect of heathen philosophy was its incompleteness; it was not the whole truth, which, now revealed in its entirety by the "Word" to the Christians, enabled them to grasp as a living universal faith what had before been only a confused medley of conflicting theoretical opinions. The unjust treatment of the Christians arose from the agency of dæmons, who, having contrived to make themselves feared, had been in consequence worshipped. Socrates tried to destroy their influence, and eventually fell a victim to their vengeance, under the pretence that he denied the existence of the gods. The same nefarious arts were now being practised against the Christians; they, too, were called Atheists; but the accusation was wholly unfounded, or, at least, only true in case dæmons were to be accounted gods.

[1] Justin, Apol. i. ch. iv. and vii.; Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iv. 7.

9. *Celsus.*

These efforts, whatever their immediate result, were in themselves a new epoch in Christian history. The Christians were no longer an obscure sect, but an extensive party led by cultivated intellects; so that it became necessary to examine its meaning carefully, and either to accept or answer the arguments adduced in its favour. Among those who, towards the close of the second century, undertook the latter task, was a Greek philosopher named Celsus. His refutation of Christianity anticipates most of the usual objections. The argument first proceeds on Jewish ground, adverting to the improbabilities of the gospel narrative, the lowly appearance, sufferings, &c. of Christ. "How," says the objector, "can Jews be blamed for not believing what was not believed by his own followers? Why should other men be expected to die for him who was deserted by his own intimate associates? If he really rose from the dead, he should have shown himself openly to his enemies and judges, not to a few superstitious women only, and those who had a direct interest in supposing him to be alive." But the point at issue went far beyond the petty quarrel between Jew and Christian. The latter was limited to the inquiry whether a divine messenger had already come, or was still to come; the philosopher raises the previous question whether it be probable that God should send such a messenger at all; whether it be reasonable to suppose Him to intervene in the coarse palpable way presumed by such a mission. Why, asks Celsus, should God come down from heaven? Was it to investigate that which, by virtue of his omniscience, He must already have known; or to correct that which his Almighty power might have corrected long ago? And if God, the ideal of all that is greatest and most perfect, descended from heaven to assume a human form, He either submitted to a change and diminution of his former perfections, or practised an unworthy deception. Moreover, every revelation must have a special purpose, and this speciality leads inevitably to contracted and unworthy ideas of the Supreme Being. The Jews and Christians, with their special pretensions to divine revelation, were like two frogs in a ditch, trying to convince themselves that heaven and earth were made expressly on their account. They thought themselves singled out as favourites of Heaven,

and that God either came Himself, or would send his son to help them; and yet by their lame attempts to explain allegorically the undignified trivialities of the Old Testament, they showed that they were ashamed of the very revelation they boasted. In the general plan of the Almighty, whose care extends equally to the whole creation, there is no room for special revelations; but if, according to the prevailing prepossession common to Jew and heathen, there were intermediate beings (angels or dæmons), through whom a revelation might possibly be made, let the Jew or Christian prove their revelation to be intrinsically superior and more rational than the Greek; and that (excluding what was manifestly fabulous) it contained anything which had not been anticipated by other less arrogant, though at least equally valuable, systems.[1] It was indeed incontestable that these pretended revelations had borrowed much from other systems, in many cases, however, misapplying what was not clearly comprehended. Moreover, they were inconsistent with each other, for how could the same God command the Jews to amass wealth, to subdue the earth, and to kill their enemies, while in the other giving the precisely opposite injunction, to eschew riches and honours, to take no care for food or raiment, and to offer the cheek to the smiter? Celsus here asks, was it Moses who spoke falsely, or was it Christ? Did God, when he sent the latter, forget his former orders? had he in the interval changed his mind? or was he, as some Christians asserted, a being entirely different from the Mosaic God? Celsus takes but a superficial view both of the Christian notions and the heathen opinions which he contrasts with them; disparaging the former as absurd, and ridiculing the faith which, addressed almost exclusively to the low and ignorant, resembled a pedlar prowling about a house, who despairs of imposing on the master, but gladly converses with the women and servants.[2] Yet in the midst of his ridicule, he cannot avoid admitting the fact of the wide prevalence of Christianity, and is at a loss to account for so strange a phenomenon; he can only conclude its silent progress to be the result of a fraudulent conspiracy, treating the absolute supermundane God of Christian and Jew as an unjustifiable revolt against that general feeling

[1] Plato, says Celsus, never pretended to any exclusive divine revelation; he did not say "such a person is God's son; he has disclosed divine truth to me, which you are bound to accept and to believe."

[2] Origen, Cels. iii. 55.

of heathenism, which in all its phases had ever claimed the presence of its Deity as immanent in nature. The God of heathenism was not a being who sat concealed behind the arras of the sky, ever and anon giving capricious tokens of his existence from his hiding-place by interfering with the machinery of nature; he was the living support of that machinery within man and all around him, the radiance of the sun and the healing influence of fountain and breeze, directly controlling the changes of the seasons, and conferring the fruits of the earth. Celsus, therefore, denounces the jealous monotheism of the Christians, arguing that if they refused to worship those "dæmons" or divine powers, whose existence, as beneficent agencies in nature, was in fact acknowledged under a different name by themselves, they ought to cease to live, since live they could not without at each moment enjoying the means and conveniences of life provided by these agencies.

10. *Victory of Christianity.*

The prejudice which at first treated Christianity as criminal was gradually silenced. The charge became limited to that of clever deception, and the religion which Celsus affected to contemn was already the profession of an influential body, challenging every resource of oratory and philosophy to refute it. Lucian's ridicule in his romance about the Cynic Peregrinus was less earnest than the arguments of Celsus, and therefore less formidable; indeed, his general Epicurean indifference to the various forms of religion disqualified him from forming a philosophic judgment as to their comparative claims and real hold on human nature. The life of Apollonius of Tyana, by Philostratus, indicates a more advanced stage in the relative position of the Christians. This work, without expressly naming Christianity, describes the career of a heathen reformer, who during the first century went about, like Jesus, healing the sick and raising the dead, teaching pure religion and morality, and exemplifying in his own person all the virtues he recommended. The work, conceived in a spirit of rivalry rather than hostility, may be regarded as impliedly conceding the truth, and even divine origin, of Christianity, contending only that it had no monopoly of truth, and that Jesus did not stand alone as moral renovator of mankind. Christianity was indeed only one phase

of a general psychological phenomenon. The decay of ancient nature-worship, combined with the discovery of a remoter Deity transcending nature, compelled the religious sentiment to seek compensation by some new mode of reuniting itself with this higher object; and both in heathenism and Christianity the means were found in the idea of revelation, intermediate beings, and mysterious rapture. To Christianity nature is but a corpse occasionally galvanised by miraculous intervention; and man is a fallen being, whose reason, as well as the laws of nature, are lost sight of in the notion of revelation. Through a similar process philosophy had become specifically religious, and the want left unsatisfied by its former inadequate results was supplied by a direct appeal to the supernatural. The issue was an eclecticism formed out of old traditions and systems, taking Platonism and Pythagoreanism as a basis, and blending the religious mysticism of the East with the mysteries and legends of Greece. In this medley, called new Platonism, Christianity, now 200 years old, had a fair claim to be an ingredient; but then it was necessary to adjust the precise terms on which the claim should be admitted. The new Platonist Porphyry was regarded as the most formidable of all the foes of Christianity; and certainly he made many objections to the Old as well as New Testament which were difficult to answer, and the destruction of his book was the consequence of Christian resentment. Yet he was by no means a wholesale antagonist like Celsus; and it was the very circumstance that his remarks took the form of criticism instead of contradiction, that made them so obnoxious and so dangerous. He exposed the inconsistencies of the gospel narrative and doctrine, as also the futility of the wild allegorising expedient resorted to by Origen, by which rationality was set at nought, and anything might be made out of anything. But he did not allow the error or deceit out of which these corruptions arose to have originated with Jesus; it was his Apostles and later followers who had misrepresented him, and who, for instance, attributed to him a divine character to which he had never himself pretended. Discrimination was needful, in order to separate what was admitted to be original and true in Christianity from the anomalies which heathenism felt obliged to repudiate. Jesus was not, as the Christians gave out, a God, though he was certainly a divine man; but then heathenism could show examples of men who had been as much favoured by Heaven as he. The same motive which induced Philostratus

to record the life of Apollonius, caused Iamblichus and Porphyry to write that of Pythagoras; one, says Iamblichus, who was not only the very soul of wisdom, but an incarnation of the Deity, "sent to bring down the light of happiness and philosophy for the salvation of the human race." But the superiority of these distinguished personages did not make them gods, or in any way interfere with the prerogatives of the received heathen deities; on the contrary, every nation had an appropriate object of adoration in its presiding genius or dæmon, and the multitudinous forms of Polytheism were a divine appointment, of which the exclusive worship of the Christians seemed an unnatural violation. It should be observed that with Septimius Severus[1] began a line of rulers, whose tastes were more Oriental than Roman, and who had no longer the same motive as their predecessors for persecuting Christianity for the sake of the State. They patronised the religious syncretism of the day, and in the "Lararium" or private chapel of Alexander Severus, Abraham is said to have stood associated with Orpheus, and Apollonius with Christ. Favoured by this impartiality, Christianity had free scope to display its ability to supply the moral void left by the displacement of the ancient creed. It had become "catholicised" or humanised; and the relaxation of its ancient unsocial, nay, rebellious asceticism, made its intimate alliance with the State comparatively easy.[2] Tertullian and other apologists openly pleaded what was virtually the cause of Protestantism and general religious liberty against heathen conservatism, and men were left to decide for themselves whether with Porphyry they were bound to adhere to the established forms of honouring the gods, or might obey the dictates of conscience, and openly reject what they could not seriously believe. On the accession of Decius, however, heathenism again took an attitude of reactionary alarm; the old Roman policy was resumed, and persecution became, for the first time, general and systematic. The leaders of the churches were sought out and made to expiate, by their deaths, the public misfortunes of the empire. Even Diocletian at last yielded to the remonstrances of the anti-Christian party, who, caring less for liberty of conscience than for the safety of the State, had probably found the impunity of the new faith incompatible with the prejudices of

[1] Septimius himself, however, showed little mercy to the exclusive creeds of Jew and Christian.

[2] See Rom. xiii. 1, and 1 Pet. ii. 17.

the people and soldiery.[1] Yet men could not help respecting a religion which had already lasted 300 years. The Christians were very numerous; they filled high offices at court and in the camp, were entrusted with the government of provinces, and in one instance had attained the purple. The temples were comparatively deserted, the Roman sacra profaned, and vulgar fanaticism perpetually outraged by the proximity of the cross. Rome found it necessary to submit to circumstances, and formally to acknowledge a revolution which was already accomplished.[2] The interests of State policy appeared suddenly to coincide with those of the religion to which hitherto they had been so entirely opposed; and the very parties who had been foremost to persecute now concurred in favour of toleration, disguising, however, the change of plan in the newly-issued edict, by falsifying facts, and declaring the former severity to have been directed, not against Christianity, but in its favour; not to subvert the faith now tacitly admitted to have been from the first a "religio licita," or ancient institution of the empire, but only to check unauthorised deviations and schisms. But the adhesion of Rome was given, not to Christianity for its own sake, still less to the right of free choice in religion, but to the *de facto* establishment of a new spiritual rule, and the well-approved ascendancy of the incorporate church. It was the exchange of one State religion for another, the substitution of a living faith in place of a dead formalism; the religion which had been discarded when it was weak, because portending disruption, was welcomed when strong as a guarantee of union and stability. Constantine, by becoming Christian, placed himself at the head of a powerful organisation. In his combination of ruler and religionist, he may be regarded as the immediate precursor of the Popes. He fraternised with the bishops, affected to consider himself their colleague, and to be the divinely-appointed guardian of the general peace. He became a Christian emperor because the empire had become Christian; and the secret of his motive is revealed in his constant appeals to the good sense of clergy and people in favour of unanimity, deprecating those theological strifes and controversies which he declared to be absurdity,

[1] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. viii. 1, observes that the persecution first broke out in the army.

[2] Alexander Severus, and even Hadrian, had proposed to receive Christ among the number of the gods; but they were deterred by fear of the extent of the change which would infallibly have ensued. Gieseler, i. 1, p. 259, n. 6.

impiety, and madness. It is less easy to determine the causes of the memorable revolution of which his conversion was the result. History, like the dial of a clock, presents results, but conceals the machinery producing them. We cannot pry into the secret annals of the human heart, or trace, unless indirectly and imperfectly, the despondency, incredulity, and disgust which made room for Christianity, and prepared a keen relish for its reforms and consolations. But it does not follow that because the revolution was obscure, it was therefore miraculous, or at least more so than many familiar things which occur in a world governed certainly by Providence, but not by a self-contradictory system of Providential intervention or interference. Christianity grew because it could best make good the blank left by the discredit of the old religions. A pietistic and moral reaction took place in men's minds in an age of depravity, and it is not strange that an idea, which had long been the solace of the persecuted Jews, should have been taken up by the other oppressed nations under Roman sway. Doubtless the spiritual self-respect of individuals, the reconcilement of the conscience by means of atonement, the hopes connected with the unseen world, had all been once provided for by Paganism, as they must be by every religion which has had a real historical existence. But their efficacy is ever dependent on belief; the heart remains unsatisfied when the understanding hesitates, and its religious consolations vanish when the god who was supposed to dispense them proves to be unreal. Baffled in one direction, the heart seeks satisfaction in another; and this, naturally following the general bent of the time, was at the Christian æra that of a subjective idealism. The Christian believer unconsciously sympathised with contemporary Pagan philosophy, when he construed religion as a practical revolution of the heart, and declared, "est Deus in nobis," that the kingdom of God was within him. An ideal assurance of a heavenly future, called forth by the contrasted experience of an unsatisfying present, combined with an earnest moral reaction in an age of degeneracy, became the new life and light of the world. The realisation of its external ascendancy was a mere matter of time and opportunity. Its power was chiefly exerted among that large class of whom Celsus speaks so contemptuously,[1] the weavers, shoemakers, and curriers, those above the prejudices of gross

[1] Origen, Cels. iii. 52, 55.

ignorance, but uninfluenced by the political or speculative predilections of the noble and philosophical, men whom history disdains, but the secret working of whose minds was sure to turn the scale of opinion, and give character to the age. Persecution only nourished the flame originally kindled by the mind's reaction against the hardships of the world, and was regarded as abridging to a favoured few the passage to a divine kingdom, soon to be within the reach of all. "All the refinements of your cruelty," exclaims Tertullian,[1] "only give zest to our calling and multiply our numbers; our blood is the fruitful seed of a more abundant harvest." A new generation had silently displaced the race of the heathen. "Although of yesterday only," says Tertullian,[2] "we already fill all your quarters, your cities, strongholds, even your camps; we are in the palace, the senate, the forum; we leave you only your temples; we can match the numbers of all your armies; why, there are more Christians in a single province!" He declares that "the empire, without its Christian subjects, would be a solitude;" its very existence depended on its being Christian. The immediate instrument which brought the church into union with the empire was the episcopate. The previous concentration of ecclesiastical authority facilitated the transition which the genius of Constantine recognised as a State necessity.[3]

[1] Apol. ch. . [2] Ib. ch. xxxvii. [3] See Baur's "Christenthum."

PART V.

ORIGIN AND PROGRESS OF DOGMA.

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1. *The Ebionitish and Gnostic Christologies.*

CHRISTIANITY was a religious revival founded on feeling. It appealed directly to the soul of the recipient. Its advent was the soul's retreat from all its usual points of contact with external life, from vain forms of worship, from immoral gratifications of the senses, from the hopelessness of national and individual enterprise, and from the over-sanguine researches of philosophy. The soul's asylum was itself; within itself it found that which had been the goal of heathen philosophy as well as of Jewish expectation—religion, and the object of religion, God. Thus the idealism, which originally was only subjective, had a natural tendency to become an objective one. The mental impression naturally directs attention to the object producing it; and Christianity was in the same way impelled to seek an objective basis, soon to become entirely absorbed in the contemplation of it. Men could not rest satisfied with a mere sentiment; they required a definite hope, and an external guarantee to assure them of its truth. In filling up its outlines they could not stop short of that union with God which is the great aim of all religion; and while thus striving to make good human deficiency out of divine fulness, they naturally found the required assurance in the claims and character of him by whom the new aspirations had been suggested. To bring the divine object of these aspirations nearer to the consciousness,—to help the mind by means of ideal links and resting-places to comprehend its capacity for divine reunion, and thus to develop the full significancy of its faith, continued for many ages to be the great unpremeditated aim of Christian speculation and teaching.

The character and attributes of Jesus were thus made to supply that substantial connection between God and man which had been wanting in Judaism; and his divinity, symbolical of the mental elevation of his followers, became the leading dogma of his religion. At first vaguely felt or surmised, it was afterwords directly questioned and adjudicated; the different successive phases of the religion producing proportionately-altered conceptions respecting the attributes of the Founder. When Christianity was Judaical, Christ was the son of David or Jewish Messiah; a "man-descended man,"[1] but a man especially endowed with the divine Spirit.[2] For although a Jewish Messiah was necessarily human, there was a tendency, even in Judaism, to elevate his character. The prophets had exhausted language in panegyric on the coming Saviour; and when long secular disappointment concentrated the thoughts upon a future world, he became, instead of a merely temporal deliverer, a supernatural Being or Angel "coming in the clouds."[3] All religion naturally invests the Deity with the character of parent in reference to the human race. The Jews, as God's chosen people, claimed a peculiar right to address Him as their Father; and this relationship they applied especially to the successive magistrates or "mediators" of their theocracy,—to prophets, judges, and, above all, to kings.[4] Thus the phrase, "Son of God," became a theocratic title, which afterwards, in consequence of that well-known oracle held up[5] to later generations as the great Messianic charter or normal expression of theocratic hope,[6] was definitively appropriated to the ideal king, or "anointed one," who was to be the earthly vicegerent of Jehovah. When, therefore, Jesus admitted himself to be the "Son of God,"[7] he admitted that he was the Messiah; and the designation might be variously turned so as to reflect varying theories of Messiahship. For instance, it was very differently understood by those who, like the so-called Nazarenes, expanded it into the coarse and inconsistent legend of the supernatural conception, and those who, idealising Christianity with St. Paul, kept aloof from genealogies, personifying its saving power alone in an exalted conception of its Author. The earlier gospel narratives and the Acts, though often containing materials of comparatively recent date, in general exhibit that early phase of theory

[1] Justin. Tryph. xlviii. p. 156, Otto. [2] According to Isaiah, xi. 2.
[3] Daniel vii. 13, 14. [4] Comp. Psalm ii. 7. [5] Ps. lxxxix. 12.
[6] 2 Sam. vii. 12, seq. [7] Luke xxii. 70.

in which the death of Jesus had merely made it necessary to separate the prophetic from the kingly office of the Messiah, transferring the latter to a future period, with the assistance of the imagery of Daniel. They uniformly[1] assume Christ's historical manhood, and ascribe the superhuman part of his nature to the agency of the Holy Ghost, exerted either at baptism or birth. As man he might be liable to death; but as the Messiah, in association with whom the Jewish resurrection doctrine had originated,[2] he was the Lord or principle of life, and, his human career terminated, immediately assumed the insignia of his true dignity.[3] From this point starts the Christology of St. Paul, which, still vague and undecided, may be considered as standing midway between the early Ebionitish tenet of a generally human Redeemer, and the later theory making him substantially divine. Christian autonomy and universality, as advocated by St. Paul, opened the way to the fuller recognition of Christ's divinity; and as the religion became spiritualised, the idea of its author was spiritualised also. True Christianity, considered as the inner solace of the mind, the ideal wealth of the future, implied a master entirely independent of external appearance and mortal contingencies. Christ had certainly lived as a man; he was the second Adam, whose body was subject to death, and who in his human person expiated the ancient curse. But he was not, like the first Adam, an essentially material or "psychic" being, but the "pneumatic" man, the "quickening spirit" of life; a humanity so raised and refined that we already lose sight of the historical Jesus in the ideal principle of salvation, and are scarcely sure that any humanity is really left. The first Adam was of the earth, earthy; the second heavenly;[4] not an ordinary man with a dash of divinity superadded, or in consequence of accruing circumstances elevated, but humanity in its original unadulterated form, bearing indeed the "semblance" of a sinful mortal body,[5] but really the sinless being fitted to be the vehicle and dispenser of "grace" to the rest of mankind.[6] St. Paul declared that he

[1] The language of the Evangelical "Memorials" of Justin makes it clear that Christ's spiritual endowment was originally supposed to have been conferred for the first time at his baptism. The citation (Tryph. ch. lxxxviii.; comp. Epiphan. Hær. xxx. 13) runs: "Jesus having come to Jordan, the Holy Spirit flew down upon him in the form of a dove, and a voice came from heaven saying, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

[2] Acts ii. 24, 36; iii. 15. [3] Matt. xxviii. 18; Luke xxii. 69.

[4] 1 Cor. xv. 15, 21. [5] Rom. viii. 3. [6] Rom. v. 17; 2 Cor. v. 21.

knew no more Christ after the flesh;[1] that his sole concern was the risen Christ;[2] that this risen Christ was the divine Spirit[3] sent forth to irradiate the heart of man,[4] and to secure his celestial affiliation. St. Paul did not assert that Christ was God; he distinctly made him subordinate;[5] yet it was this spiritualising theory which was the first step to an apotheosis involving his antehistoric antemundane existence and divine consubstantiality. The increasing tendency to idealise the Redeemer, to elevate his person in proportion to the aggrandisement of his religion, extended his agency to the past as well as the future; as the religion came to be regarded as aboriginal and universal he began to assume a mysterious place in the early history of the Israelites;[6] and since universal nature as well as human events seemed to stand in necessary relation to his appearance, it was said of him, as it had been said of the divine "Wisdom" in the Apocrypha, that all things existed "by" him, or "on his account."[7] It was at this point that the speculative imaginations of the Gnostics interwove the Christological idea with cosmical theory. In Gnostic speculation the human character of Christ was either omitted, or else made entirely subordinate to the part executed by him in the great ideal drama of the recovery and self-reconciliation of the Spirit. This treatment was objectionable in two ways: first, that by confounding historical Christianity with the general evolution of the world, it merged the moral influence of Christ's personality in a physical principle; and secondly, that it jeopardised his personal dignity by placing him in careless juxtaposition with many other ideal personages or "Æons." The Valentinians assigned to Christ a "psychic" or "pneumatic" body only; the Marcionites, following out the hint of St. Paul,[8] treated him as a mere phantasm,—thus making the external events of his life, which were

[1] 2 Cor. v. 16.

[2] Rom. viii. 34; although, indeed, to the Jew-Christians of Rome he had condescended parenthetically to include the Davidical Messianity "according to the flesh," Rom. i. 3.

[3] 2 Cor. iii. 17. [4] Gal. iv. 6.

[5] 1 Cor. iii. 23; xi. 3; xv. 24; comp. 2 Cor. iv. 4, 6. Rom. ix. 5, is wrongly pointed in our version. See Tischendorf ad loc.

[6] 1 Cor. x. 4. The Jewish "Schekinah" and "Memra" were supposed by the Rabbis to have similarly accompanied the journeys of the Israelites, and may perhaps have contributed to the idea of Christ's pre-existence.

[7] 1 Cor. viii. 6. [8] Rom. viii. 3.

so all-important to human interest and feeling, suppositious or "docetic." Even the Clementine Homilies, though strongly asserting the "monarchy" or unity of God in opposition to the attempted insinuation of a double Deity,[1] transforms the historical Christ into the general spirit of inspiration or prophecy passing through the ages and dispensations of the world, symbolising his universal agency in mental phenomena, so as almost to betray the secret that inspiration means nothing more than the internal prompting of the soul.[2]

2. *"Hebrews," "Colossians," and "Ephesians."*

The Judaical and the Gnostic, in other words, the sensualistic and speculative theological extremes, were the Scylla and Charybdis of early Christological speculation. In the one, the human character of Christ was too prominently kept in view, —in the other, it was nearly obliterated; in short, one was apt to be derogatory and anthropomorphic,—the other docetic. The speculative Ebionitism represented in the Clementine Homilies takes the latter side; its Christology is little more than an amplification of the prevailing idea which, ever since the death of Christ had tended to identify him with the "Spirit" with which he was supposed to be endowed, and to make him the embodied representative of the spiritual life especially desired at the time. Orthodoxy, or rather the more measured views of those who at that early day were unconsciously creating orthodoxy, strove to recall men from vagrant fancies, to vindicate indeed Christ's paramount superiority, yet at the same time to retain him, as human Redeemer,[3] in the closest connexion with human sentiments and sympathies. The First Epistle of John denounces as "antichristian" the docetic denial that Jesus came in the flesh;[4] that to the Hebrews, as well as Ephesians and Colossians, while in opposition to derogatory Judaical

[1] "Our Lord," says Peter, "neither asserted the existence of many gods, nor did he pretend to Godhead himself; he rather called him blessed who saluted him as the Son of God."

[2] "Truth," says Peter (Hom. xvii. 18), "wells up innate and pure in the souls of all pious persons. In this way came the revelation to myself from the Father; for as soon as the Lord put the question to me, as recorded in Matthew, He came over my soul, and I replied, I know not how, Thou art the Son of the living God."

[3] Hebr. ii. 17. [4] Ch. iv. 2, 3.

views, insisting on many of the lofty Christological claims which had been advanced by the Gnostics, vindicate against Gnosticism Christ's corporeal personality as well as his divine superiority and anteriority to the angels and all created being.[1] The writer of the Epistle of Barnabas adopts the views of St. Paul, whose words indeed he quotes;[2] he assumes the pre-existence of the "Son of God,"[3] but, like St. Paul and other early writers (for instance Hermas), identifies this pre-existent Being with the Holy Spirit. The Christ of the Homilies is not the son of David, but the "Son of God" in this sense;[4] and indeed most of the early forms of speculative Judaical Christology are only applications of the Alexandrian doctrine of the perennial migration of "Sophia," or "the Spirit," through the seven great prophetical "pillars" and ages of the world, according to which Christ, superhuman and pre-existent, had from time to time from Adam downwards appeared at pleasure in bodily form to effect a beneficial change in human affairs.[5] But all Judaists were, of course, Monotheists; they would only allow Christ to be an angel or archangel, or a re-issue of Moses; they insisted on his being, at all events, created; and, as we learn from Epiphanius,[6] often denied his attribute of Divine Sonship altogether. Angels were the only intermediate beings recognised by the Jews; and their apocalyptic literature, from Daniel downwards, had been unable to exalt the Messiah above this class of agents. Cerinthus, like Stephen and St. Paul,[7] is said to have attributed Hebrew legislation to angel ministers, and to have ascribed a similar character to the Spirit or "Æon" temporarily united at baptism to the man Jesus.[8] It was, however, an essential requirement of all Christian feeling, whether Judaical or otherwise, to extol as much as possible the dignity and superiority of the Messiah. St. Paul's Christ becomes really appreciable only from the moment when, as the "first fruits" of the resurrection,[9] he resumes his true cha-

[1] Hebr. i.; Coloss. i. 15, seq.; ii. 9; Eph. i. 21.
[2] Comp. Barn. xii. with Rom. xi. 36; Barnab. vii. and xxi. with 1 Cor. vi. 19, &c.
[3] Ch. v.
[4] Ch. xviii. 13. It may be observed that Mark's "Son of God" (i. 1) is spoken of as "Son of David" only in one place (x. 47), and that by a *blind* man. See on symbolical blindness, Zeller, Tubingen Juhrbücher, viii. 403; Baur's "Paulus," p. 71.
[5] See Epiphan. Hæres. xxx. 5.
[6] Hær. xxx. iii. and 16.
[7] Epiphan. Hær. xxv.; Acts vii. 53; Gal. iii. 19.
[8] Tertull. de Carne Christi, ch. xiv.
[9] 1 Cor. xv. 23.

racter as the "Lord from heaven," or the "life-dispensing Spirit."[1] Carrying on the expression of this sentiment, the Epistle to the Hebrews, written evidently by a person familiar with the Alexandrian theology, declares, in opposition to the reactionary timidity of Judaical Christianity, that Christ, as Son of God, "the brightness of his glory and express image of his person," is a Being essentially divine, pre-existent, creating and upholding all things,[2] and therefore superior to all other created beings, spiritual as well as terrestrial. He who upholds all things "by his Word,"[3] and who effected the atonement "through the Spirit,"[4] was indeed temporarily made lower than the angels for the suffering of death, but was immediately afterwards crowned by God with transcendent power and glory. The "Colossians," like "Hebrews," addresses persons who, though by no means as yet alien from the church, erred, like Justin and many others, by mixing angelolatry with Christianity; and, pursuing the effort to give a more decided expression to Christ's dignity, applies to him the predicates, though not the name, of the Alexandrian personification the Word or "Logos." He is the visible form of the invisible God, embodiment of the divine Pleroma, circumference and supporter of the universe.[5] Though, as "first-born of creation," on a level with the world and immanent in it, he rises by his universality above it; he is the pleroma or fulness of revealed Divinity, in whom the unseen God displays the amplitude and exuberance of individual life. The visible realisation of this ideal immanency of the universe in Christ is the church. As Christ is the "bodily" form of God, so the church is the body or external form of Christ. Christ is the cosmical and ecclesiastical centre, the real source of Gnosis; and the object of both "Ephesians" and "Colossians" is to show, that as from Christ all things, including even angels, originally proceeded, so by his atonement all things, both in heaven and earth, were reconciled and reunited to him.[6]

In these writings occur the first distinct intimations of the adoption by Christianity of the Alexandrian doctrine of the "*Logos*."[7] "Logos," "reason," or "the Word," had been

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 45; Rom. i. 4.
[2] "By whom," it is said, "he made the æons," *i. e.* the present and future worlds.
[3] Ch. i. 3. [4] Ch. ix. 19.
[5] Coloss. i. 16, 17; comp. Gfrörer's Philo. i. p. 188, ff.
[6] Eph. i. 10; Coloss. i. 20. Hebr. iv. 12.

found, by the Jewish students of Plato, a convenient term to express the agency of Divine Wisdom in creation, and its influence over the human soul. It united in one term the rational plan of the universe with the enunciation of that plan, or uttered creative fiat of its Maker; and with the "Word" of prophecy, so often mentioned and almost personified in the Old Testament. It has been often questioned whether Philo, in his descriptions of the Logos, means a personification or not. He makes it the sum of the divine emanations or external agencies, either denominated by the Platonic term "ideas," or Judaically personified as "angels," calling it Archangel, Intercessor, Paraclete, the Great High Priest, the Image of God, Son of God, and even second God; the latter expression he, however, qualifies as improper or figurative only. The mind strives to represent by a series of symbols the really inexplicable connexion between the visible creation and its invisible Cause; but the wisest of the philosophers, while indulging in religious reverie about the transcendent mysteries of the universe, did not affect a deceptive perspicuity as to what they could not comprehend. In addition however to this necessary source of obscurity, Philo, by attempting to blend Hellenic metaphysics with Old Testament imagery, produces a chaotic medley which, if obscurity were his object, effectually answers the purpose. It must however be observed, that the monotheism which avails itself of a conception like "the Logos" to express the divine energy in the universe, leaves little of Monotheism really remaining; since all the moral influence of the Deity, as well as his physical causality, is withdrawn from him, leaving behind only a dry metaphysical residuum which the heart can no more sympathise with than the intellect can comprehend.

3. *The Apostolical Fathers and Apologists.*

The Asiatic development of the Logos doctrine preceded its acceptance in the West. The Christology of the early Roman writers, represented by the names of Peter, Hermas, and Clemens, follows that of the "Hebrews," and is that suited to the head of a religion claiming to be the absolute and universal one. The divine element in Christ is "the Spirit;" the spiritual essence being either an agency immanent in God, or separated and individualised as an angel; an idea which, as

already observed, sufficed, in the early period, not merely for Judaical Christianity, but even for Pauline writers, as Luke, as well as St. Paul himself. In the First Epistle of Peter, which insists on the absoluteness and perfection of the religion, Christ is said to have been pre-ordained to the work of salvation before the world; and it was his Spirit which, in the mouths of the Prophets, announced, in language unintelligible at the time,[1] the events of his career.[2] Hermas speaks of the Son as "before every creature," one by whose name the whole world is sustained;[3] his essence is the Holy Spirit;[4] although an angel or "servant," he is a great power and authority;[5] in short, he is brought as near to the Deity as possible without being actually deified. The Adam-Christ of the Homilies is admitted to be God's Son; but the writer carefully avoids confounding him with God. "Our Lord," he makes Peter say, "neither asserted the existence of many Gods apart from the Creator, nor his own Godhead; but only called him blessed who salutes him as Son of God." "Indeed," he adds, "it is wrong to give the same name to things which are not alike in all respects. Christ, doubtless, was of the substance of the Father, and came forth from Him; but this no more entitles him to be called God, than human souls, which are also of divine origin; to deify Christ in this general sense can be no distinction whatever." Even writers using the term "Logos" were at first far from doing so in the true Trinitarian sense. Justin's indiscriminate application of the term Logos, with other predicates, to the "Son of God,"[6] is one proof among many that he could not have taken it from the fourth Gospel;[7] and his general language makes it difficult to suppose that there existed at the time any settled doctrine on the subject. He seems, in one passage,[8] to make association with the Father accompany, or even precede the birth of the associate, who is said to be a distinct being,[9] yet not severed from the Father's essence in such

[1] Comp. Barnabas, ch. iv. and v. [2] 1 Pet. i. 11, 12, 20.

[3] Simil. ix. 12 and 14; comp. Hebr. i. 3, and 1 Clemens, ch. xvi. and xxxvii.; Hilgenfeld, Apost. Vater. p. 169.

[4] Simil. v. 5 and 6; ix. 1; comp. 2 Clem. ix. [5] Ibid.

[6] Especially Tryph. ch. lxi.

[7] See Hilgenfeld, Evangelium Justin's, p. 293, seq. Justin's gospel citations are evidently pre-canonical, but have a general resemblance to the synoptical type. His ignorance of the fourth Gospel is an almost inevitable inference from certain passages, as Tryph. ch. xl.; comp. John i. 29; xix. 36; also Tryph. ch. c. p. 336, c. Otto, where the object of *νοησις* stands opposed to the "*γεγραμμενον*."

[8] Apol. ii. 6. [9] Tryph. cxxviii.

a way as to alter it from what it was before. Yet aversion to the coarse physical analogies incidental to the emanation theory seems to have led Justin to ascribe the origin of the Logos to an act of will, and to make his unity with the Father not substantial but moral. It is impossible to trace with minute precision the history of this difficult metaphysical puzzle. Later writers seem to have been chiefly actuated by controversial motives in regard to Gnosticism or Ebionitism; some endeavouring to counteract Gnostic emanational doctrine[1] and the tendency to vague unhistorical abstraction; others vindicating the claim of a divine head of the church, and making a reactionary protest against over-familiarity. The first class of writers, as Tatian, Theophilus, and Tertullian, risk the dignity of the Son in their anxiety to preserve his subordination and personality, while endeavouring to fix the mode and moment of the commencement of his separate existence. Theophilus,[2] for example, uses the coarse metaphor in the Psalms ("eructavit cor verbum"), of God having his Logos within his bowels, and vomiting him forth before creation. Driven by similar views to accept the idea of a graduated Trinity of subordinated beings emanating one from the other, like the Gnostic Æons he disapproves, Tertullian tries to defend his position by adducing physical analogies,[3] and by stooping to the admission that the Devil might sometimes speak truth, and even heretics be occasionally in the right.[4] On the other hand, Athenagoras and Irenæus, eager to avoid ascribing a derogatory act or attribute to the Supreme Being, hazard the personality of the Son by ignoring the epoch of his origin, and insisting too closely on his divine unity; the same considerations influenced the Alexandrian Fathers, so as in Clemens almost to efface the mediatory character, and to make his Christ a complete contrast to the concrete corporeity of Tertullian's. Between these two opinions, one giving greater prominence to Christ's personal identity with God, the other to his personal individuality, opinion long fluctuated; on one side contemplating a Son undistinguishable from his Father,—on

[1] This controversial tendency is especially marked in the words of Pseudo-Ignatius, ad Magnes. ch. viii. "The eternal Word, *not* produced out of Silence."

[2] Ad Autol. ii. 10.

[3] Showing that the "projection" or "prolation" of the Son was no more a diminution of the Father, than the issuing of light from light, or rational discourse from the source of reason.

[4] Adv. Praxeam. ch. viii.

the other, one so subordinate to Him as almost to cease to be divine.

4. *The Asiatic Church.*

The Apologists, and some of the apostolical Fathers, show an increasing acquaintance with that Christian development of the Logos doctrine which, originating apparently in Asia, was afterwards generally adopted by the church. Our earliest acquaintance with the Asiatic church is derived from the Apocalypse and St. Paul's Epistles; from which it appears, that no sooner had the Gentile Apostle published his "Gospel" to the Galatians, than emissaries from Jerusalem arrived to thwart him; and he owns that they who gratefully accepted him at first[1] easily succumbed to these new influences, that a Judaising form of Christianity triumphed, and that his labour was thrown away. His efforts at Ephesus were similarly frustrated;[2] and soon after his departure the Apostle John took up his residence there as official "high priest"[3] of the churches of Asia. It should be remembered that primitive Christianity consisted of two elements; it was Judaism, but Christian Judaism; and its character differed according to the preponderance of one or the other. The early Judaical Christianity of Rome, described in St. Paul's Epistle, was gradually modified by new ideas and circumstances, until, expanding with the requirements of a metropolitan establishment, it attained the comprehensiveness suited to a world-wide destiny. In this catholic and compliant spirit the religion of Rome, professing to be a recapitulation of what was true and good in the whole course of divine revelation from the beginning of the world,[4] was generally tolerant to widely-varying sects and systems; Valentinus was patiently listened to, and Marcion met with decided opposition only from those extreme Judaists of the Homilies, who, far from being themselves molested or excluded as heretical, were for the time among the most strenuous friends of the hierarchy. The course of Asiatic development seems to have been different. Here the specifically Christian sentiment seems to have early assumed a more uncompromising and hostile attitude; though Judaistic

[1] Gal. iv. 14, 15. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 32; xvi. 9; Rev. ii. 2.
[3] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iii. 23 and 31.
[4] Hebr. i. 1; Titus i. 2; 1 Peter i. 10, 11; iii. 19.

in form and language, it declared war against Judaism as well as Paulinism; and under the banner of the "Lion of Judah"[1] set up exclusive claims to doctrinal superiority and prophecy. In Asia the ecclesiastical sway of Rome had but a limited influence; Peter was here obliged to submit his pretensions to those of John; and even Irenæus, with all his deference for Rome, appeals to Asiatic authority in regard to Christology and Chiliasm. The visionary book ascribed by tradition to the great Asiatic Apostle agrees with what we know from other sources both of himself personally[2] and of Asiatic Christianity in general, as subsequently instanced in the austerities and wild prophesyings of the Montanists; and they who, with Caius and the later Roman church, repudiated the latter, disavowed also the authority of the composition. Caius is said to have ascribed the Apocalypse to the less creditable name of Cerinthus,—a symbol of early Ebionitish Gnosticism, indicative of speculative views afterwards proscribed by the church, but in many respects akin to those of the book in question. Their general import amounts to an assertion of the superiority of Christian over ordinary or empirical Judaism, conveyed in the Gnostic formula that the supreme God was for the first time revealed by Jesus, who at his baptism became united with Christ or the Holy Spirit. This sentiment, accompanying a Christian appropriation of Jewish ideology, is generally characteristic of the Apocalypse. Its form, its work-righteousness, its Chiliasm, and other eschatological imagery, are all unmistakeably Jewish. For instance, there was a Rabbinical tradition, that three things might allowably share the divine name "Jehovah"—just men, the Messiah, and the city of Jerusalem, the appropriation in each case being warranted by texts from Scripture;[3] and the author of the Apocalypse evidently knows, and in his peculiar way avails himself of the privilege.[4] The elect, so distinguished by him, belong to the twelve tribes; and the multitude of Gentile converts make but a subordinate ap-

[1] Rev. v. 5.

[2] *E. g.* he was called "παρθενος;" comp. Rev. xiv. 4, and the esteem in which "παρθενια" was held by the Montanists. According to Tertullian (c. psych. ch. v.), man, by abstaining from food, may become the equal of God. Comp. ch. ix. The Apostle was also believed to have had great energy of character (Mark iii. 17). His attributive priesthood may be alluded to in John xi. 51, and xviii. 15.

[3] Isaiah xliii. 7; Jerem. xxiii. 6; Ezek. xlviii. 35.

[4] Comp. Rev. iii. 12; xiv. 1; xix. 12; xxi. 11, 22; xxii. 4. The new name (iii. 12) is probably mysteriously and paraphrastically expressed in reference to the Messiah in the passages i. 4 and 17; ii. 8; and xxii. 13.

pendage to the proper inhabitants of the "heavenly Jerusalem," "the first fruits of God and the Lamb." Even the Christology, seemingly bordering on Alexandrianism in regard to the pre-existence of Messiah[1] and his identification with the "Word" and with Jehovah,[2] may be sufficiently accounted for from Jewish mystical sources.[3] But the writer pleads Judaically only in a Christian sense, and as the fanatical partisan of an essentially new and exclusive system. The old Jerusalem is disgraced and disavowed;[4] yet it is still the "beloved city," and a new Israel rises, under the auspices of the Christian Messiah, on the ancient foundations,[5] the spirit of prophecy is revived under the name of the "testimony of Jesus," and its guardians are as "kings and princes of the earth,"[6] immediately dependent upon God, and recognised even by angels as their equal.[7] The Johannean Christianity founded on "love," or on a devoted attachment to the cause and person of Jesus, seems from the first to have combined with Judaical feeling and forms a more objective character than the Pauline, and to have been deeply imbued with the speculative mysticism which throughout distinguished the Oriental mind. It was through this tendency that the activity of the Eastern church was chiefly devoted to the development of dogma, as that of the Western to hierarchical polity. Christian Rome continued the tendencies of ancient Rome, "regere imperio populos," to establish an organisation for governing mankind; the East laid the foundations of speculative theology, which, at the close of the second century, was taken up and carried on by the Christian philosophers or legitimate Gnostics of Alexandria. The writers of each school, at first very similar in character (as Hermas and the Apocalypse), diverge as they advance, the apostolical series ending on one side with Pseudo-Ignatius,—on the other, with the Gospel of John. The name of John seems to have had a significancy in Asia corresponding to that of Peter at Rome. It might be claimed for Asiatic orthodoxy in general, and serves to classify the series of its records, advancing from a strongly Judaical commencement to a creed more tolerant and elevated. Most of the literary records of the earlier period, as the books

[1] Ch. iii. 14. [2] See Zeller's Theol. Jahrbücher, vol. i. 710, and vii. 250.
[3] Comp. Strauss, Glaubenslehre, i. 412, seq.; Gfrörer's Jahrhundert des Heils, i. 307, seq.; ii. 30.
[4] Ch. xi. 8. [5] Ch. xx. 6, 9. [6] Ch. i. 6; v. 10.
[7] Ch. xix. 10; xxii. 9.

of Papias, Melito, &c., have perished; but enough remains in the Apocalypse, the Sibylline oracles, and other relics, to give a sufficiently faithful idea of its type of doctrine. The Chiliasm of Papias and others, the anti-Jewish yet Judaically-tinted Gnosis ascribed to Cerinthus, the prophesyings and asceticism which the Montanists carried to an excess scarcely warranted by the Apocalypse,[1] were the general characteristics of an epoch which, to the sobriety of later times, seemed uncouth and heretical. The close of this visionary period is marked by the Roman disclaimer of Montanism; but it was long before a decided rupture took place between the church and its less tractable members. Even Tertullian, though a Montanist, was not, during his lifetime, considered a heretic; and his writings were long used and esteemed by the church. A firm champion of apostolical precedent, he claimed for his independent fanaticism the undoubted sanction of antiquity. According to him, there existed no real quarrel between the "Pneumatici" and "Psychici;" they had "not severed the bonds of fraternity; they had one faith, one spiritual church." The quarrel, when it came, was ecclesiastical, not doctrinal; for even the adversaries of the Montanists were unable to impugn the antiquity of their opinions; or if they did, were forced, like Caius the Roman presbyter, Dionysius of Alexandria, and others, to deny also the apostolical origin of the Apocalypse, and to accuse them of wholesale literary forgery.[2] It seems to have been the peculiar theories of the Montanists that finally determined the Christian adoption of the Logos doctrine. The earlier apostolical writings, making the divine element in Christ the Holy Ghost, are evidently unacquainted with it; but the Montanists, who claimed the Holy Ghost as the inspirer of the present, required another name for the Son, and this was already provided in the Christian application of the term Logos.[3]

[1] Comp. ch. ii. 21; xxi. 8; xxii. 15.

[2] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iii. 28; vi. 20. The fragments preserved by Eusebius of the controversy between Caius and the Phrygian leader, Proclus, curiously illustrate its style and the kind of evidence, altogether unconnected with the merits, appealed to in conducting it. Proclus argues: "After this there were four aged prophetesses, daughters of Philip in Hierapolis, where their tombs may still be seen, as well as that of their father." (Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iii. 31.) Caius rejoins (Ib. ii. 25): "But I can show the cenotaphs of the Apostles; for if you go to the Vatican or the Ostian way, you will find the trophies of those who founded this (the Roman) church." The quarrel of the churches was, in short, an abrupt appeal to antiquity and authority, and although the real presumption in these respects was in favour of the Orientals, victory naturally fell to the more practical side.

[3] Rev. xix. 13.

5. *The Fourth Gospel.*

The later Paulinic writings lean towards the speculative mysticism which inspired the Gnostics; they merge the religion in its Author, and dwell less upon the inward regenerating effects of faith in its original Pauline sense than upon its outward cause or object.[1] This object was the divine element in Christ's person; and the refining or defining process could only stop at an actual deification of it. In the specification of this element the Epistles in question contain little which had not been more or less distinctly anticipated by St. Paul, who already uses expressions in regard to Christ[2] akin to those of Alexandrianism; and the difference distinguishing the later writings from the earlier seems chiefly to consist in the more exclusive direction of the mind towards ecclesiastical rule and metaphysical transcendentalism; indicating a further advance from the asceticism and subjective independence of primitive Christianity to the objective in theology and the absolute in government. Christ's person is held up in these writings as the all-sufficient solution of the paradoxical antithesis between the Christian life and the Christian expectation. As with Christ, so among the mass of mankind, humiliation and suffering are shown to be the necessary antecedents of exaltation and glory. The "Philippians"[3] enforces disinterestedness and lowliness by the example of him who in his pre-existent state possessed the dignity and "form" of God,[4] but who voluntarily divested himself of this glorious state in order to assume the "form" of a servant, the "σχημα ανθρωπου." On this account it is said that God had highly exalted him, giving him a name above every name; and it is added, God will one day likewise change our vile body, in order that it may become like his glorified body.[5] The same moral is taught in the "Hebrews;" only here the view taken of the scheme of redemption is more hierarchical than Gnostic; and the eventual exaltation of the divine High Priest is ascribed to his having observed the priestly virtues of obedience and fidelity,—to his having "loved righteousness and hated iniquity."

[1] The author of "James," St. Paul, and the writer of the fourth Gospel take very different views of the nature of religion. Comp. James i. 27; Romans viii. 10, 14, 15; John xvii. 3.

[2] *E. g.* where he speaks of the "image of God," 2 Cor. iv. 4, 6; and of his pre-existent creative energy, 1 Cor. viii. 6.

[3] Ch. ii. 5, &c. [4] Comp. 2 Cor. iv. 4, 6. [5] Ch. iii. 21.

Christ, however, though "first-born of creation," is not openly exempted from its range;[1] he is like unto his brethren, only highly distinguished above his "fellows."[2] Thus his humanity is still, as with St. Paul,[3] an unreconciled contradiction. Suffering and sonship stand together somewhat strangely and unharmoniously, and the atonement is a temporary eclipse or abnegation of his proper nature.[4] In the Johannean, or ultimate development of Oriental Paulinism, the last barriers of Judaical feeling are overthrown, the glory mingles with the humanity, and Christ is plainly asserted to be aboriginally divine as the Logos. In this composition we reach a time when the old controversy of Jew and Gentile had been decided,[5] when the "grace and truth" of Jesus was felt to stand immeasurably far above the law of Moses,[6] and when Christianity, though certainly grafted on Jewish historical antecedents, was established as the immemorial aim of seers and lawgivers,[7] the sole true religion of mankind.[8] It is probably not without significance, that while the other disciples seek only the theocratic Messiah of the Jews, the only follower of the "Lamb of God"[9] is the imaginary writer of the Gospel, whose name may have been selected as an appropriate watchword of a type of Christianity differing from that which he really professed, because experience was supposed to have best qualified him above all others to act the part of Evangelist; to make the "testimony of Jesus" (μαρτυρια Ιησου) an enduring record of the "glory"[10] which had been the object of his living study and contemplation. The ideal construction of Christ's character, instead of ascending upwards from below, here becomes more explicitly an emanational or descending process, the essential element being the divine, the human secondary and superadded. The result is not an exalted man, but a humanised, or scarcely humanised, God; a being almost wholly spiritual; and the effort of Christianity to consummate the apotheosis of its hero is, with some reservation, completed. Christ, though clearly explained to be subordinate to the Father,[11] is yet one with Him;[12] there is no expression implying his being a part of creation, thereby really limiting

[1] Comp. Coloss. i. 15; Hebr. i. 6; iii. 2.
[2] Hebr. i. 9.
[3] 2 Cor. viii. 9.
[4] "Κενωσις," "ταπεινωσις," "ελαττωσις."
[5] Comp. ch. iv. 21, and the expression, "your law," viii. 19; x. 34.
[6] Ch. i. 17; vi. 32.
[7] Ch. v. 46; viii. 56; xii. 41.
[8] Ch. i. 9; iii. 15; xi. 52; xii. 24.
[9] Ch. i. 36–46.
[10] Ch. i. 14, comp. Apoc. i. 2.
[11] Ch. v. 27, 30; x. 29; xiv. 28.
[12] Ch. x. 30.

his pre-eminence; his coming in the flesh is not, as heretofore, a "lowering" or dereliction of his dignity, but an unbroken continuation of it, and men "see" plainly revealed the glory of the "Only Begotten" full of grace and truth. "The Word existed in the beginning;" his existence was an activity ever directed to (προς), yet immanent in the Father (ων εις τον κολπον του πατρος); and though not absolutely God (ὁ Θεος), he was, and is, a divine person (θεος).[1] The absolute Godhead far transcending all finite things and intelligences, our knowledge of Him must be derived from the revelation of his Son;[2] and the writer's object is, to show that this Son is at the same time distinct from the Father and identical with him;[3] that he is in heaven even while he seems to stand on earth.[4] The writer alters the character of the incident which, in the earliest gospel forms, dated the commencement of Christ's divinity from his baptism;[5] and disclaims, on the part of the Baptist, the character of Elias, whose consecration was expected in Jewish theory to inaugurate the Messianic office. From what Theodoret[6] says as to the omission of the genealogies by Tatian, it appears that the reason for so doing was the obvious one of ignoring the carnal origin of Christ; and it has been observed that Mark's Gospel,[7] as well as John's, exhibit in this respect the character of an advanced Christianity, and were indeed both appealed to[8] by the Docetists. The "Word," in his mysterious unity with God, is said to have been the light and life of the world and in man; but his light "shined in darkness," and darkness, as prophecy had foretold,[9] refused to receive or comprehend it. Darkness is naturally inimical to light, and men shunned light because their deeds were evil.[10] But it was the eternal purpose of the Logos to confront and

[1] The Gospel itself (ch. x. 34) explains that the word θεος might be very generally and vaguely applied.

[2] Ch. i. 18. [3] Ch. xiv. 10, 11. [4] Ch. iii. 13.

[5] This was intimated in the "Gospel of the Hebrews" by the application to Christ's baptism of the words, "Thou art my son, *this day* have I begotten thee" (Justin's Tryph. ch. lxxxviii.; comp. Hebr. i. 5; v. 5); to which was added the circumstance that "fire immediately appeared on the Jordan;" *i. e.* the Holy Ghost appeared there for the first time; a conclusion which Justin endeavours to exclude by saying that the appearance took place merely on account of the by-standers; while the fourth Gospel, which evidently he was unacquainted with, makes it into a mere sign to distinguish the person of the incarnate Logos given specially to the Baptist.

[6] Hær. Fab. i. 20. [7] Ch. i. 1, and xv. 39 and 44.

[8] See Irenæ. Hær. iii. 11, 7.

[9] Isaiah vi. 9, 10; John xii. 37, 40; comp. Acts xxviii. 26. [10] Ch. iii. 30.

overcome this adversary by a series of manifestations ever increasing in fulness and brilliancy; for this purpose he "became flesh," and the Gospel describes the progress of his self-manifestation triumphantly carried on in the works, doctrine, and death of the historical Jesus, whose divinity, if dimmed to outward observation by his mortal lineaments, shone forth only the more victoriously and unmistakably at the instant of his death. Yet, notwithstanding this apparent effort to carry out the deification, the writer does not absolutely quit Monotheism. Christ's unity with the Father does not exclude subordination to that "only true God"[1] who is allowed to be "greater than all,"[2] and "greater than himself;"[3] who "sent" him in a ministerial capacity into the world,[4] and in reference therefore to whom his predicate of "θεος" in its wider Biblical acceptation,[5] may, after all, mean no more than that moral unity or community of will, which St. Paul, or even Jew-Christianity, might have admitted. The identity of the Christian Redeemer with the Logos, so confidently assumed by the evangelist, must, of course, have been a notion already familiar, meeting the Christian desideratum of an absolute expression for the high attributes of Christ, while it gave the necessary form and consistence to what had been a vague theological idea. It satisfied the Gnostic tendency to personify metaphysical conceptions while cutting short their exuberance, and striking the true catholic medium between Ebionitish reserve and Gnostic superfluity. Many critics, Baur especially, have shown at length the impossibility of considering the fourth Gospel historical, or as anything but the Christianised Logos-theory in narrative form; a representation, by a writer well versed in Hellenistic ideas and language, of the advanced Asiatic theology of the second century,[6] in which the vanishing of the old covenant contemplated in "Hebrews"[7] is completed, the exclusive sanctity of Jerusalem at an end,[8] and the

[1] Ch. xvii. 3. [2] Ch. x. 29. [3] Ch. xiv. 28; xx. 17.
[4] Ch. iii. 16; v. 30; xvii. 3. [5] Ch. x. 34.
[6] The citation of the fourth Gospel by Basilides, over which, as supposed to be attested in the "Philosophoumena," a shout of triumph has been raised by orthodoxy, is hardly worth alluding to, the anonymous writer's language being far too vague to authorise any decided inference. Even if the citation could be with certainty attributed to Basilides, the effect would be, not to overturn the Tübingen theories, but only to alter by a few years the approximative date of the fourth Gospel, as conjectured by Baur.
[7] Ch. viii. 13. [8] Ch. iv.

Jews, instead of being, as in the Apocalyse, the legitimate heirs of salvation, are definitively disclaimed as sons of darkness and the devil.[1] As the garb of flesh, in itself profitless,[2] served to clothe and express the divine essence of the Logos, so the ostensibly historical materials only supply an artificial framework to incorporate the evangelical idea. The writer's object is to justify by his narrative everything true and elevated in Christian sentiment; to found an intellectual Catholicism, not on the artificial basis of a comprehensive external rule, but on an enlargement of the Christian idea, so as to unite the voluntary suffrages of the votary of faith as well as the man of works, the Montanist as well as the Gnostic. In the conflict of new ideas and ancient traditions, when doctrine was fluctuating and documents contradictory, when arbitrary principles of interpretation were constantly resorted to to reconcile such incongruous records, and to explain what seemed irrational or unmeaning, it is not surprising that a gifted genius should have ventured to put his own construction on the materials before him; to seek steadily through the vain babbling of inferior minds for the true indications (σημεια) of the Logos, and to look on the conflicting mass of extant writings and traditions as the "dead body,"[3] from which the "word," or pure "spirit" of the Gospel, still remained to be extracted.[4] Assuming the ancient data as a basis, he strives to trace through the obscurity of vulgar semblance an infinite reality; and, omitting or casting into the shade everything unessential, everything savouring of Jewish prejudice or human degradation, without any magical device or spectral transfigurations, reproduces the genuine image of Christ's manifested glory. He puts forth his work anonymously, in full reliance on the force of the unanswerable internal evidence it addresses to the sympathies of congenial souls; he speaks of himself, not as an apostle, but only as one of the general Christian body,[5] any one of whom might be said to have spiritually "seen the glory" brought home, by means of faith, to their own convictions.[6] However anxious to affirm the truth of what he relates, he does not profess to be himself an eye-witness, but only a reporter of the testimony of an eye-

[1] Ch. viii. 44; ix. 39. [2] Ch. vi. 63.
[3] "Τὰ σωματικα."—Clem. Al. in Euseb. Hist. Eccl. vi. 14.
[4] "John, divinely inspired, produced a pneumatic gospel."—Ibid.
[5] Ch. i. 14–16. [6] Ch. xiv. 23; xvi. 14; xvii. 3, 30, 24; xx. 29.

witness. At a later day, indeed, it seems to have been thought desirable[1] to change the "μαρτυρων περι τουτων" into the "γραψας ταυτα;" to assert the direct apostolic authorship of this noble burst of Christian inspiration; to explain to the literary sceptic who might be startled with the many discrepancies from ordinary gospel-tradition, that innumerable particulars of the sayings and acts of Jesus remained unrecorded and unknown, and that therefore their apparent novelty implied no imputation upon their truth.[2] Yet the passage, chapter xxi. 24, expressly distinguishes the disciple who "wrote these things," from the "we" believing his testimony; and the reference has rather the effect of weakening than confirming our reliance on the over-anxious attestation; since "ταυτα" ("these things") must needs include the account immediately preceding; and it is impossible to conceive that there was any original writing of John ending with the abrupt interrogatory of the 23rd verse. And if the original Gospel be supposed to have ended, as it appears to do, at the close of the 20th chapter, there is still no distinct affirmation of an immediately apostolic authorship. The original writer declares, in chapter xix. 35, that the sole eye-witness (ὁ ἑωρακως) of the facts there mentioned, and to which he attaches so much importance, "bare record," and that his "record was true;" moreover, that the aforesaid eye-witness knows (or "knew," κἀκεινος οἰδεν") his record to be true, "in order that ye might believe." It is certainly satisfactory to be told that our informant was perfectly convinced of the truth of his own statement; but it is not said that the eye-witness wrote anything himself; on the contrary, he is appealed to by the writer as the unimpeachable witness on whose evidence the written account depends; and, though certainly a writer may, in many cases, allowably speak of himself in the third person, it is scarcely conceivable how, if intending to make himself the eye-witness, he is warranted by grammatical propriety in saying "he who saw bare record," instead of "I saw, and testify what I saw;" thus awkwardly appealing to his own past attestation, as if he were not himself present to renew and to confirm it. It seems inconceivable that the same writer who, in the Apocalypse, repeatedly refers to himself by name,[3] should here, where so

[1] Chapter xxi. being evidently superadded to the end of the original work.
[2] Ch. xxi. 25.
[3] Rev. i. 1, 4, 9; xxi. 2; xxii. 8.

anxious to convince, affect an indirect style of address and unnecessary incognito, when his object would have been best answered by standing openly forward in his proper person. Certainly the affectation of disguise cannot be ascribed to a modesty which does not appear to have belonged to the Apostle's character,[1] nor, indeed to that of any one who should have so constantly made himself individually prominent as "the beloved disciple;" a designation which, however appropriate in the mouth of his master or a third person, was wholly unfit to be ostentatiously paraded by himself. Even if we could suppose that the Apostle John wrote a book so much in advance of the ideas and convictions of his youth, and so full of perplexing anachronisms and geographical mistakes,[2] it would still be impossible to believe that a writer displaying so high an order of intellect and feeling, could have been guilty of the bad taste of eulogising and glorifying himself in a way not borne out by the other Gospels, all of which assign the primacy to Peter. And when the Asiatic Christians, headed by Polycarp and Polycrates,[3] claimed John's authority for the Oriental passover observance distinct from the commemoration of Christ's death, it is obvious that they could not have been aware of a Gospel of John, which not only ignores the proposed observance, but emphatically sanctions the contrary Western practice,[4] and rather omits altogether the institution of the Lord's Supper,[5] than allow any obscurity or doubt to interfere with the Pauline significancy of the Crucifixion. The work may possibly have originated with the party of the elder Apollinaris,[6] who were anxious to combat the lingering Judaical tendencies of their national church, while eagerly maintaining in opposition to Rome its ecclesiastical independence. Hence the studied attempt (especially conspicuous in the superadded 21st chapter) to exalt the character of John, as apostolical representative of the Asiatic Church, at the expense of that of Peter, assigning to the latter, in significant allusion to the practical tendencies of Rome, the inferior office of ecclesiastical administration, while reserving to John, as first and favourite disciple, the spiritual sympathy and intuitional superiority so highly ex-

[1] Matt. xx. 21; Mark iii. 17.
[2] References in Schwegler, Nachap. Zeit. ii. 350. [3] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. v. 24.
[4] Making Jesus himself to be the passover, according to St. Paul's dictum, 1 Cor. v. 7; comp. John xix. 36. [5] Ch. xiii. 1, 2.
[6] Schwegler, Nachap. Zeit. ii. p. 354.

tolled throughout the composition.[1] Christ's declaration to his disciples "that there were some standing near who should not taste death until they had seen the Son of Man coming in his kingdom,"[2] seems to have been very naturally understood afterwards to refer to St. John, who long outlived the other Apostles. Hence the legendary exaggeration about his predicted immortality; an inaccuracy which the writer of the concluding chapter[3] corrects, while claiming the prediction in its authentic shape as a distinction really conferred on the reputed writer of the Gospel. In the course of the disputes between the Roman and Asiatic churches, there naturally arose invidious comparisons as to the respective dignity of the two leaders; and it would, of course, be urged that the martyrdom of St. Peter gave him vastly higher claims than those of the rival community, which, in many respects, seemed to betray the Christian cause,[4] and could certainly show no such apostolical example. The writer replies that whatever the individual pretensions of that Apostle who continuously followed Jesus, and on all occasions had been the first to recognise him,[5] they were, at all events, no appropriate object of envious animadversion on the part of the rival establishment; that the proper business of Peter was to "follow;" to feed the sheep of Christ; to convey safely to his Master the multitude of fishes which his net providentially held without being broken; reserving the consideration of what might really be the comparative claims of him who merely waited for the Lord's spiritual coming, for persons better qualified than the querulous Peter to comprehend their meaning. Rome seems to have acknowledged the justice of this reasoning, the more so because the Asiatic advocate admitted its right of pastoral supremacy; nay, it invented a kind of martyrdom for the rival Apostle, whose severe, yet not absolutely fatal torture, harmonised with the predicted "tarrying,"[6] without interfering with the more signal heroism of Peter. The Catholic tendency of the Gospel was in general agreement with Roman feeling, and perhaps the repeated allusions which it makes to Philip, the Apostle of Phrygia,[7] who is supposed to press for a vision

[1] Comp. ch. xx. 29; xxi. 7, 15, 16. It has also been supposed that the epithet "φιλοπρωτευων," applied in John's Third Epistle (ver. 9) to one Diotrephes (probably a symbolical name), refers to the ambitious pretensions ("episcopus episcoporum") already made by the Roman pontiffs.

[2] Matt. xvi. 28. [3] Ch. xxi. 23. [4] Ch. xxi. 20.

[5] Ch. i. 37; xx. 8; xxi. 7, 20. [6] Ch. xxi. 22.

[7] Ch. vi. 5; xii. 21, 23; xiv. 8, 9.

or palpable display of the divinity, may be intended to correct the eccentricities which still disfigured Asiatic Christianity, and especially to reprove the gross millennarian pretensions of the Montanists.[1] The Alogians, on the other hand, are said to have recognised in the Gospel a defence of Montanism, and to have in consequence denied its authenticity, ascribing it, as well as the Apocalypse, to Cerinthus; they found it easier to give it a bad name, coarsely corresponding to its anti-Judaical character, than to make critical inquiries into its origin; and were led by the facility of so stigmatising it, to acquiesce in the reputed antiquity which was relied on by its advocates as evidence of its genuineness. The intention to refute Cerinthus, often imputed to the fourth Gospel, as well as the legendary representation of the same doctrinal antithesis in the story of John's collision with Cerinthus in the bath, has been more truly referred to the obvious contrast presented by the development of Asiatic Christianity, and to the antipathy evinced in its later manifestations to the Judaising tendencies of the earlier. The historical John was an "apostle of the circumcision;" and we, consequently, find Paul at first occupying the very same antithetical position which John succeeded to.[2] Indeed, so far as we can form a conjecture, the Apostle would have been far more likely to have recoiled from the views of the Gospel, than from the millennarian and other speculations of Cerinthus. But when Asiatic Christianity in general took a higher tone, it naturally claimed ancient precedent in its favour; it therefore carried over the name of the Apostle from a fanatical and contracted theory to a liberal one, making the fancied author of the Gospel overlook and often contradict the sentiments imputed to him in the Apocalypse.

6. *Pseudo-Ignatius.*

The final rupture with Judaism indicated in the fourth Gospel as regards the Asiatic church, is marked in the Epistles of Ignatius (whose Latinisms betray the secret of their origin) for that of Rome. Beginning with an almost unmitigated Judaism, the Roman church had gradually divested itself of most of the properties inconsistent with Catholicity; but its hierarchy was

[1] Ch. v. 25.

[2] Epiphan. Hær. xxviii. 4.

essentially Jewish; and its Christianity, notwithstanding the changes it had undergone, continued in some circles inflexibly attached to ancient prejudices. The Judaical or extreme Petrinic party having endeavoured to establish a separate interest by extolling the episcopacy, and at the same time pleading for a high church Judæo-Christianism in the name of the ancient Bishop Clemens,[1] it seems that another writer, who, while equally desirous of Catholic concentration and union, was averse to Judaical reaction, stood forth on behalf of the cause of St. Paul, under the banner of the equally famous bishop of that city[2] where Christianity is said to have first asserted its independence. In addition to the Catholic principle now generally conceded,[3] the Epistles maintain that of religious independence and autonomy; declaring Christianity (χριστιανισμος) to be the exclusively true religion, and denouncing Judaism, with its Sabbatarianism and other reactionary practices, as "evil leaven," "useless jargon," and "anti-Christian heterodoxy." To live Judaically, it is said, to call ourselves by any other name than Christ's, is virtually to admit that we are not Christians; that we have not attained the Christian grace. But in pleading the cause of St. Paul, the writer does not venture to infringe the rights of Peter;[4] like St. Paul himself, he accepts the religion of the Old Testament, though only on the hypothesis of its substantial identity with the Christian, representing the patriarchs and prophets as having believed, hoped, and waited for the Christian Redeemer. The great object of Ignatius is to promote ecclesiastical unity; to deprecate separatism in polity and doctrine. Heresy is the mischief he dreads, episcopacy the remedy; to this end the bishop is to be watchful, and to unite the qualifications of dove and serpent;[5] and the flock are advised to rally round the shepherd for security against the numerous wolves waiting to pounce on the unwary. Gnostic innovation was as much to be feared as Judaical reaction;[6] and consequently

[1] *I. e.* in the Homilies.

[2] Antioch; see Acts xi. 26. Ignatius is said to have been the Pauline bishop of Antioch, Evodius being the Petrinic.

[3] Smyrn. i. [4] Rom. iv.

[5] To Polycarp. ch. i. and ii. "Every disease," says Ignatius, "is not to be cured by the same plaister;" the bishop is therefore to be careful as to using severe measures, and rather to assuage the morbid accessions of heresy with emollients.

[6] That is, in the middle of the second century; not at the time of the real Ignatius, or at its commencement; for the era of the commencement of Gnosis coincides with that of the death of Ignatius. Hegesippus in Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iii. 32; iv. 22. Clem. Alex. Strom. vii. 17, p. 764. Hilgenfeld, Ap. Vater. p. 240.

Ignatius warns his readers against "strange doctrines" and "old fables," confounding, like the pastoral letters, the two objects of his aversion together. The Gnostic error chiefly combated in the letters is the denial of Christ's humanity; and Ignatius, without alluding, as might perhaps have been expected, to the Gnostic separation[1] of the God of Christianity from the Demiurgus or God of Judaism, insists only on the reality of Christ's human appearance and sufferings denied by the Docetists. In regard to positive doctrine he is as vague as in hierarchical advocacy and negative polemics he is firm and decided; he advances only the moderate, safe, and generally agreed on; avoiding everything open to question, or likely to excite controversy. He exhibits in this respect a striking contrast to the author of the fourth Gospel, avoiding the speculative difficulties which the latter undertakes to meet and set at rest. Agreeably with the lofty claims of the church, he makes its Head to be the Eternal Word who, though subordinate to the Father, was with him before the Æons (or worlds); entitling him a "God in human form," and "the Christian's God;"[2] while repudiating those results of Gnosticism which seemed adverse to the continuity and universality of the faith, he is evidently under the influence of Gnostic ideas,[3] claiming knowledge of the unseen world, the Archons and angels, the visible and invisible, &c. But, to him, Gnosis is summed up in Jesus Christ.[4] To the prolix details of Gnostic emanation he opposes the single idea of Jesus as the Logos;[5] the Gospel is thus made to appear to him, as to Justin,[6] in a new light; and as the Epistle to the Hebrews contrived to find Christianity in the Old Testament, Ignatius elicits from the evangelical narrative the higher import it presents to his own mind of the abiding

[1] The two cardinal inferences of Gnosis are Docetism and dualism; the ignoring Christ's human character, implying at the same time a loftier idealised Christianity; and in general combination with this, a deep sense of the contrast between matter and spirit, between the old religion and the new, not unfrequently accompanied by a degradation of the Demiurgus, or God of the Old Testament. The former aspect of Gnosis, as exhibited in the Docetists, Ignatius naturally deprecates, as being incompatible with the obtuse intellectual condition required for the purposes of hierarchical absolutism; the latter inference, implying the commencement of a critical comprehension of the progress of religious opinion, he is unwilling to countenance, yet equally unwilling explicitly to contradict, lest he should be giving encouragement to the Judaists.

[2] "Ὁ ἡμων Θεος."—Rom. iii.; Ephes. xviii.; Smyrn. x.; Magnes. vi., viii., and xiii.

[3] Hilgenfeld. Apost. Vater. p. 252. [4] Ephes. 17. [5] Magnes. viii.

[6] Tryph. xlviii.

union of Christ with the Father,[1] and of the mystic significance of his birth, baptism, and unction.[2] In other respects he has little doctrine[3] to teach except to recommend his reader to "believe with charity;"[4] to submit, that is, the reason to the feelings; and to practise the ecclesiastical duties of "faith" and "love;" admirable virtues doubtless in the highest acceptation of their meaning, but of questionable merit in the sense of unreasoning adherence to what the church prescribes, and predetermination to like whatever, under the pretence of leading men to God,[5] she may consider favourable to her interests. He quotes an uncanonical gospel[6] in general agreement with Matthew; and it would be singular that a writer entertaining views nearly akin, in many respects, to those of the fourth Gospel, should have voluntarily confined himself to the synoptical accounts, which he is obliged to modify to suit his purpose,[7] had the other been known to him. Only one passage appears to have a precise (though, indeed, contradictory) relation to the fourth Gospel;[8] and yet there are many instances of a similarity of view,[9] which probably gave rise to the legend of Ignatius having been a disciple of the evangelist.

7. *Orthodox Gnosis in Alexandria.*

Christianity at its outset had been addressed not to the "wise and prudent," the mighty or noble, but to "babes in intellect," the "poor" in spirit and in fortune, the "weak things of the world," by whom the world's pride was to be confounded by exhibiting the superiority of foolishness. It was an assurance founded on feeling, not on external evidence or argument; and was addressed rather to those who, dissatisfied with the

[1] Magnes. vii. This idea preponderates so much with Ignatius as to cause him to be accused of Patripassianism; the assertions in this sense are, however, qualified, as in the fourth Gospel, by others indicating his going forth from the Father, his subordination, conformity of will, &c.

[2] Ephes. 17–19.

[3] One passage (Phil. 8) alludes to St. Paul's doctrine of justification; but the latter is not adhered to, and Christianity is viewed as a system of ordinances—"ἐντολαι" or "διαταγματα."—Trall. vii.

[4] Philad. ix. [5] Ephes. 9 and 14.

[6] According to Jerome, the "Gospel of the Nazarenes," or "the Hebrews."

[7] For instance, as to the import of the star, and meaning of baptism. Ephes. 18 and 19.

[8] Ch. iii. 8; comp. Philad. vii. [9] As Magnes. vii.; Rom. iii. 7; Smyrn. iii. &c.

world and with prevailing systems, yearned after salvation or consolation, than to acute thinkers and favourites of fortune comfortably unconscious of deficiency. In its early stage, therefore, the pretensions of worldly wisdom seemed superfluous or hostile;[1] and before it could become a distinct and settled form of religion, it had to contend against internal sources of disruption, in the shape of Gnosticism and Montanism, or independence of thought and sentiment; the one by encouraging individual impulse and fanaticism being inimical to the necessary quietude of an establishment; the other tending to dissipate practical religion by spreading it over an indefinite speculative surface. Yet these tendencies were to some extent as inseparable from the church as they are from human nature. The same questions which had excited the curiosity of the Gnostics, were interesting to all intelligent Christians; and it became necessary to provide some sort of reply to the general intellect as well as to the feelings; to consider whether the opposition made to the extreme results of inquiry and to the Gnostic mode of conducting it, should be extended to inquiry in itself. More especially would those who lived in the same intellectual circles out of which the chief sects of Gnosticism originated, feel its stimulating influence; and Alexandria, the cradle of Jewish and afterwards of Christian speculation, produced an orthodox theology or Gnosis, in which the Church endeavoured to meet the extravagancies of its erring sons by a judicious discussion of their difficulties and appropriation of their resources. In this way it endeavoured to oppose to heretical speculation a legitimate and harmless equivalent, such as might be supposed to have been authorised by the Lord and approved by the Apostles. The resulting form of "Gnosis" has sometimes been called a Christian "philosophy," being indeed the philosophic effort of a time when reflection first began to resume its empire after the first ebullition of Christian sentiment. But its energies were cramped by certain given preconceptions; and the mental effort which in true philosophy is directed to the discovery of being, was in the Fathers addressed exclusively to develope a systematic construction of the faith. The term "philosophy," therefore, applies to Patristic theology only in a limited sense. A philosophy tied to dogmatical authority is a manifest self-contradiction; and Christian dogma was already

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 7; Col. ii. 8.

sufficiently fixed to render the use of the term on this account unwarrantable, although not so precisely and completely as wholly to supersede speculation, still less so damaged by the ordeal of criticism as to force it, as was the case long afterwards, into a new independent channel.

The earliest reflective efforts of the Christians were directed to ascertain the distinctive character of their religion, and its rank relatively to other systems. They insisted, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, for instance, and that of Barnabas, on its being the sole true "covenant" or means of salvation, and their ingenuity was exercised in fortifying the inference by citations from the Old Testament. Confidence of superiority encouraged the tendency already evident in St. Paul,[1] to regard this absolute and perfect revelation as including the exercise of all the mental faculties, and in particular a higher comprehension[2] of "the truth," or of divine things. The pretension was, however, very imperfectedly maintained, and even the historian of Christian "philosophy"[3] is forced indirectly to confess his title-page to be a misnomer. The chief distinction of the so-called philosophy seems to have been an enlarged and more liberal comprehension of former systems; the admission against dogged ignorance, of the general claims of heathen wisdom as well as Jewish, as part of a universal revelation; and on the other hand, the assertion, against the one-sidedness of heretical Gnosis, of the plain doctrines of Christianity, its one personal creating God, its fall, its sacrificial atonement, and its ideas as to resurrection and retribution. The Apologists, while allowing philosophy to have been a Gentile revelation, were prepared to show that Christianity was the only true philosophy,[4] that the same Logos had been the inspiration of Moses and of Socrates, and that if a judicious selection were to be made from the pagan sages of everything unimpeachable to be found among their works, the result would be found to tally with it exactly.[5] Justin claims all true philosophers for Christians;[6] but seems to have been little competent to appreciate the meaning of philosophy or the value of evidence. Disclaiming artificial reasoning,[7] he professes only "God's grace to understand the Scrip-

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 8; 2 Cor. viii. 7.
[2] "Πλειων γνωσις." 1 Clem. ch. xli.; comp. Phil. i. 9; iii. 10.
[3] Ritter's Christ. Philos. i. pp. 300, 308, &c.
[4] Melito in Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iv. 26; Justin, Apol. 1, ch. xx.; Tryph. viii.
[5] Lactant. Inst. vii. 7; Min. Fel. Octav. p. 155.
[6] Apol. i. 46, p. 230, Otto; Tryph. viii. p. 32. [7] Tryph. lviii. p. 190.

tures;" but the grace which he so highly values is, like that of Barnabas,[1] little more than a quibbling attempt to decipher Christianity out of the Septuagint. Conceiving that all men, including heathen philosophers and poets, had a share of divine truth, he pronounces the share of those who lived before the revelation of the incarnate "Word," or truth in its entirety in Christ, to have been exceedingly small, and even that to have been in general stolen from the Hebrews.[2] Clement of Alexandria means probably the same thing. He eulogises heathen philosophy as a useful aid and necessary preparation for Christianity in opposition to its hyper-orthodox ("ορθοδοξασται"—Strom. i. 9,) decriers; but afterwards retracts the concession by declaring the devil, that prince of robbers, to have had the principal share in its composition and transmission.[3] He makes faith and knowledge the necessary complements of each other, all Gnosis requiring a groundwork of faith, and faith being rudimentary and imperfect until carried forward into Gnosis. But his Gnosis is an equivocal medley of Christianity and learning, a claim to absolute and universal knowledge founded on the idea of bringing together the scattered elements of truth which are to be found in all times and nations. A disorderly eclecticism is thus formed out of the fragments of former systems, in which the articles of Christian "faith" are confounded with the self-evident principles or first "axioms" of philosophy. Faith is said to be a compendious or anticipatory Gnosis, and Gnosis a detailed exposition of the elements of faith; true Gnosis being identical with Christianity, or that lore which Christ and the Apostles superadded by way of explanation to the Old Testament. The identity of both revelations as proceeding from the same divine source, the "Word" or Logos, is made out, as by earlier Alexandrians, Philo and "Barnabas," by means of allegory, through which for the first time, the law is placed in its true light as unfolded in the Gospel. The result is a mysterious secret ("απορρητον"), not to be carelessly or generally divulged.[4] Christ, after his resurrection, communicated it to James the "Just," John, and Peter;[5] these delivered it to the rest of the Apostles; from them it passed to the seventy, of whom was "Barnabas,"[6] the writer of the Epistle; and from these it was by God's grace transmitted

[1] Chs. v. and vi. [2] Apol. 1, ch. xliv. p. 225. [3] Baur's Gnosis, 528–530.
[4] Strom. i. 2, p. 328, Pott. [5] In Euseb. Hist. Eccl. ii. 1.
[6] Although "Barnabas" himself makes true Gnosis the property of all Christians.

without writing through a few deserving persons from father to son down to "ourselves."[1] But then it appears that the Gnostic "paradosis" thus given out as apostolic, is little more than a compilation of the author's own; and it was only by a strained effort that the requirements of scientific thought could be reconciled with the simplicity of Christian belief, or that an affinity could be traced between Greek dialectics and the Gospel. Heretical Gnosis seems to have sunk into comparative insignificance from the time that the Church, from a higher point of view, took the problems of religious philosophy into its own hands. All the contemporary systems of eclecticism had certain points of convergence and similarity; all attempted to blend religion with philosophy; and, generally speaking, were all influenced by the Platonic conception of the representative relation between the actual and the ideal worlds, the "κοσμος νοητος" and "αισθητος." But this relation might be construed positively or negatively; as implying resemblance, or the reverse of resemblance; and the New-Platonists, who took it in the former sense, disavowed the melancholy severance and alienation of creature and Creator assumed by the Gnostics, which the latter endeavoured to get over by a philosophical application of the redemption theory. Plotinus urged that the excellence, order, and beauty of the world, proved it to be no base counterfeit, but the genuine stamp of its Creator; that it was absurd to despise and shun the evident impress and reflection of divinity. Orthodox Christianity could not deny estrangement and fall; but it had reasons of its own for objecting to heretical Gnosis, for instance, to the separation of God from the "Demiurg" or Creator, and to the peculiar character of the antagonism commonly assumed by the Gnostics between the material and spiritual. If these two be considered as two preordained spheres or classes of being, implying in themselves the conditions of reconcilement or estrangement, faith ceases to be optional, and there is no more merit in the believer, or responsibility in the unbeliever. If salvation be a spontaneous gift, or natural privilege of the "Pneumatici" or spiritually minded, no room is left for the virtuous convictions or free determinations of the soul; the commandments become nugatory; baptism, instruction, &c., aimless; and the Redeemer's coming unmeaning. In short, the orthodox Fathers plead the cause of moral

[1] Comp. Strom. vi. 7, p. 771, Pott.

sentiment and practical religion against the inferences of metaphysical theory; their chief peculiarity consisting in this, that they do not, like other Gnostic teachers, resolve the soul's development into a scheme of necessity, predetermining its character and excluding its responsibility, but appeal throughout to the free action and election of the individual. They thus stand in harmony with the prevailing Petrinic orthodoxy, and the general Christian feeling in which purity of life was the grand essential; and while sharing the Gnostic tendency of the age so far as to propose intellectual contemplation as the end and perfection of human development, they always insist on making obedience to God's will the indispensable preliminary to the knowledge of Him.[1] In opposition to the dualistic Gnosis, they maintain the world, as the work of the Almighty, to be good, the continuing revelation of his wisdom and school of the soul; alone, however, it would not suffice for the purpose; God therefore co-operates from within to open the eyes of the understanding, and this He does through his Son or "Word, that perfect revelation by which He created the world, gave afterwards a written code for its guidance, and at last became flesh, in order to show by a living example how man may become God." The antagonism of heretical Gnosis determined orthodoxy to abide by those broad outlines of practical Christianity which were the real limits of its position. Origen, whose treatise on "Principles" furnished the first outline of a Christian theology, was supposed to have overstepped those limits; Clement remained within them, secured from impeachment chiefly through his mystical obscurity and self-contradictions.

8. *Irenæus and Tertullian.*

The position taken by the Western Fathers was less liberal than that of the Greek. They disclaimed human wisdom, appealing exclusively to Christian instincts. Tertullian declared the soul to be naturally and originally Christian; "not, perhaps, that, which brought up in schools and libraries, prates of the academy and the porch, but the soul in its unperverted unculti-

[1] Comp., for instance, the fourth Gospel, ch. vii. 17, with Justin, Clement, and the account of Origen in Ritter, Christ. Philos. i. pp. 435, 479, 481.

vated simplicity."[1] To the unsophisticated Christian feeling the far-fetched extravagances of Gnosticism could not but seem incongruous and false. Its horror of the material world, its numerous Æons and mythical Demiurgus, above all its tendency to idealise and symbolise historical fact, were impious travesties of holy things. Appealing to religious common sense, Irenæus complained that the mysteries of finite and infinite were after all not explained by the multitude of Æons, nor were the anomalies of creation accounted for by imagining a Demiurgus acting independently or in spite of the Supreme Being. He showed that the Gnostic systems were only heathenism in disguise, a revival of the Greek theosophies; so that we are driven to the dilemma that either Christianity was a superfluous iteration of truths already revealed by the philosophers and poets, or that it was a still less commendable repetition of what had been before proved to be useless and false. The Gnostics, he said, ridiculously claimed for themselves that absolute wisdom which they denied to the Framer of the worlds; and the very contrivances by which they endeavoured to exalt the dignity of God defeated their object, as implying change, subdivision, and human affection in the Being whose unimaginable essence they were designed to veil. Even the dualism of Marcion appeared to Tertullian to involve all the absurdities of polytheism; for if the divine principle be divided, it signifies little how far the subdivision may be carried. Moreover, to suppose the Supreme Being to have been for many ages dormant or latent, and to withdraw creation from his attributes, was not only a denial of his power, but of what Marcion mainly insisted on, his goodness; though at the same time there was a difficulty in retaining creation as a divine act; since, in order to avoid a dualism of two principles and also the supposition of change or emanation from a single one, it was necessary altogether to decline speculating on the subject, and to take refuge in the incomprehensible dogma of creation out of nothing.[2] Especially repulsive to Christian feeling was Docetism; for if Christ's appearance in the flesh was a deception, all the supposed beneficial effects of his life and death must have been deceptive also.

But the aversion of these Fathers was not confined to Gnosticism. Unlike Clement, who could find an excuse even for heresy,[3] their hatred of the unwelcome offspring of philosophy

[1] De Testimonio Animæ. i.
[2] Irenæ. Hær. ii. 10, 4.
[3] Strom. vii. pp. 887, 888, Pott.

indisposed them to philosophy itself. They recoiled from what seemed to be so fatal to ecclesiastical unity, urging that piety was better than wisdom, and that it was far better to love God and attend to the common duties of life than to make vain efforts to understand what is unintelligible. Irenæus, indeed, contradicting himself,[1] as well as some other enemies of Gnosticism,[2] said that since God is always teaching, man should be always learning;[3] and allowed within certain limits the application of reason to revealed data. He held the mysteries of religion to be no more inconceivable than those of nature; and hoped that some day they would be cleared up. But Tertullian asserted to the fullest extent the maxim that the wisdom of the world is enmity with God; and held faith, which to the Alexandrian theologians had been only a step towards the higher mysteries of intellectual intuition, to be all in all.[4] The philosophers, he said, were the "patriarchs of heresy," and their doctrines rather those of devils than men.[5] "What," he asked, "has Jerusalem to do with Athens? what connection is there between the academy and the church? between heretics and Christians? Our doctrine is from the porch of Solomon, who taught us that we must seek the Lord in simplicity of heart. Let those answer who want to introduce a Stoic, a Platonic, or a logical Christianity. We want no researches beyond Jesus Christ, no inquiries beyond the Gospel. Once believing, we require no extra belief; for this is one of the primary articles of our faith, that there is nothing which we ought to believe beyond it."[6] "Let curiosity give place to faith, vainglory to salvation; to know nothing against the rule of faith is to know everything." And while Tertullian discovered in the natural instincts of Christianity an infallible guide through scholastic perplexities, he recognised in the very contradictions of dogma the evidence of its veracity, declaring in words often since repeated, "It is credible, because absurd, certain, because impossible."[7]

The Latin Fathers were more successful in combating Gnosticism than in substituting an intelligible system in its place. They took their stand on Christian instinct, and avoided any precise expression of speculative opinion. It was easy to say that God being omnipresent cannot be said to be hidden; that

[1] Ch. v. 20, 2. [2] 2 Tim. iii. 7. [3] Ch. ii. 28, 3.
[4] "Fides integra secura est de salute." De Baptismo, xviii.
[5] De Anim. iii.; Marc. v. 19. [6] De Præscrip. Hær. vii.
[7] De Carne Christi, v.

He required no intermediate agency wherewith to create the world, which He brought forth simply by his word; that He used no patterns or pre-existent matter, since He must still have been maker of the matter or patterns, and is not like a human workman, to whom it is, of course, impossible to make something out of nothing; or that the inferior agents or beings to whom the Gnostics delegated the creative function must after all have been servants of the Almighty Will, and that consequently the work done by them was his work, &c. Such language was in fact only an evasion of the difficulty which the Gnostics would have explained, and was what would naturally be used by an enemy of inquiry to reconcile the unlearned to remain contented with their ignorance. It amounted to a confession that the Divine doings are inscrutable; and the strength of the position taken by Irenæus lies in the fidelity of Christian feeling to the postulate of the necessarily limited nature of human knowledge. It may seem strange, perhaps, that so zealous a Churchman as Tertullian should have eventually been a heretic; but Montanism differed little from the church except in regard to government, and Tertullian's church was not the visible but the spiritual.[1]

9. *The Holy Spirit.*

Most singular is the logic appealed to in defence of church dogmas. Like the Rabbinical arguments in the Talmud, it is often no more than a forced application of Scripture passages utterly unconnected with the subject. Jesus is obliged to go into Egypt in order to fulfil a Scripture sentence, referring not to the Messiah, but to the Israelites;[2] and the incarnation is attempted to be proved from a verse intimating only that Isaiah had children.[3] So, when once the doctrine of the Trinity had been received, Scripture was found to teem with corroborations of it. It was recognised in the plural form of the word Elohim, in the brooding Spirit and divine "Word" of creation, in the visionary appearances of angels, and the figurative personifications of Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus. Every one found his own determinate prepossession reflected in the oracles of divine truth. When God, for instance, addresses a newly-crowned monarch,[4]

[1] "Spiritus per spiritalem hominem, non ecclesia numerus episcoporum."
[2] Hos. xi. 1 [3] Heb. ii. 13. [4] Ps. ii. 7.

"Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee;" or a court poet says of his congratulatory ode, "eructavit cor meum verbum bonum," this "Son" and this "Word" were discovered to be the Logos. Apart from these uncritical fancies, the first age of Christianity certainly knew nothing about the Trinity. Jesus is described in the synoptical Gospels as a divinely inspired man; but the source of his inspiration, or the "Holy Spirit," is no distinct hypostasis, but only the "power of the Highest," or an imparted agency of God.[1] It has, indeed, been said that the baptismal formula in Matthew[2] supposes the Trinity; but we do not find that this formula, which may not, after all, involve the Trinitarian doctrine, was actually used by the Apostles;[3] and assuredly the use of symbolical imagery, such as doves or fiery tongues, cannot prove the personality of the Holy Ghost. The more emphatic appreciation of the divine element in Christ by St. Paul, leading to a recognition of his pre-existence, is a step in advance towards personification, but still no Trinity; for with him "the Lord" is essentially one with "the Spirit," and neither is clearly distinguishable from God. The representations given by the Alexandrian writers of the outward manifestations of the Deity, however various and expressive, stop within the limits of poetical figure, and are far from being distinctly defined either in relation to foreign systems or between each other. The divine Spirit of Hebrew antiquity and the Alexandrian "Wisdom" (Sophia), or "Logos," appeared, to the early Christian writers, not as distinct impersonations, but, as they really were, collateral equivalent conceptions; so that, although there might be a duality or plurality of approximate deifications, there was certainly no Trinity. Nothing more clearly shows how rudimentary and unassimilated as yet were all the elements of Trinitarian theory than the confused application of them by Justin, who, in a remarkable passage, enumerating as objects of worship "the Father, the Son, the attendant host of angels, and (last in order) the prophetic Spirit,"[4] elsewhere interchanges the terms at random, ascribing the same functions indifferently to the one or the other,—at one time making the Spirit the source of inspiration, at another the Son or the Logos. All the writers of the period exemplify, by their similarly irregular treatment, the uncertain state of the conflict between the old Hebrew emanation and the

[1] Luke i. 35; Acts v. 3, 4.
[2] Ch. xxviii. 19.
[3] Acts ii. 38; xix. 5.
[4] Apol. i. 6.

new Hellenistic one. In the fourth Gospel we seem at length to approach a definitive separation between the two, dating from the death of Jesus, who during his life had the Spirit in its entirety,[1] and who, on returning to the Father became for the first time enabled to confer what he had himself possessed on his disciples,[2] while by so doing he virtually returned to them himself.[3] Tertullian[4] anxiously explains, that even that portion of the Spirit which had enabled the Baptist to "prepare the way of the Lord" was withdrawn to the Lord himself, "as to its universal repository," as soon as this object was accomplished; and hence the inability of the Baptist to recognise Jesus when he first met with him. The idea seems to have been, that so long as Jesus, in whom centred all the fulness of the Deity, was present on earth, he was the perfect and only representative of the spirit and feeling essentially constituting his religion; but that when, after death, he returned to the glory of his antemundane condition as the Supreme Objectivity or Logos, the Spirit, *i. e.* the subjective Christian consciousness, became for the first time distributable among the individual members of the congregation. When in this way a fixed status had been assigned to the Son as Logos, room was left for subjecting the outstanding and still fluctuating element of divinity to a similar process. This seems to have been an immediate result of the progress of speculation respecting the prophetical inspiration of the Montanists. Montanism was not so much a specific form of doctrine as an extended period of the history of the church, during which many doctrinal modifications were gradually introduced. Strictly Judaical at first, it relaxed its Ebionitish rigour by allowing the deification of the Logos and Pneuma, exhibiting traces more or less distinct of an unbroken doctrinal continuity from the Apocalypse to the fourth Gospel; and it became desirable to show some external warrant for these changes, as being advances towards a real, though post-apostolical perfection. The Pneuma was originally the Spirit of prophecy, which, according to Joel, was to be abundantly poured forth in "the latter days." This precious gift, claimed by all Christians as source of their divine knowledge and assurance of their privileges, was especially insisted on by the Montanists, who assumed superiority to other Christians as "Pneumatici" or Spiritualists, supposing them-

[1] Ch. i. 33; iii. 34.
[2] Ch. vii. 39.
[3] Ch. xiv. 18, 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7, 13.
[4] Marc. iv. 18.

selves to represent in that capacity a third and last epoch in the dispensations of the world. They seem at first to have been as strictly Unitarian as other Judaists. Their earliest oracles proceed from "God the Father;" and the vision to a prophetess of a female Christ[1] is probably a consequence of the identification of the Son with the Sophia of the Old Testament,[2] whom the strictness of Jewish Monotheism reunited to the Almighty as his wife.[3] The assignment of distinct functions and personality to the Spirit seems to have arisen from the endeavour of the Montanists to find an objective basis in the nature of the Deity to justify their own advanced theological position.[4] The Apocalypse had already met the distinctive claims of the "new prophecy" with an effort to hypostatise its source; and when, after long controversy,[5] the Logos had been definitively deified,[6] the Pneuma, or Paraclete, was similarly treated,—the one being the constitutive principle of the divinity of Christ, the other subordinate in rank, though higher in immediate efficiency, the abiding solace and patron of the congregation. Thus, without any admitted infringement of Monotheism, was formed that graduated classification, or, as it was termed, "œconomy" of the divine nature, which, obscurely indicated for the first time in the fourth Gospel, appears in Irenæus and Tertullian as the Trinity.[7] Such Tertullian himself, when calling it "a revelation from the Paraclete," intimates to have been its origin; and the language of Irenæus, ascribing it to the Asiatic presbyters and prophets, implies the same thing.

[1] "Εν ιδεᾳ γυναικος εσχηματισμενος ηλθε προς με Χριστος, και ενεβαλεν εν εμοι την σοφιαν." Epiphan. Hær. xlix. 1.

[2] Prov. viii. 22; Grimm to Wisdom vii. 28; viii. 2, 3; ix. 16, 18; Justin, Tryph. 336c, and 418c, Ed. Otto.

[3] Comp. Mangey's Philo. vol. i. p. 361; Clem. Hom. xvi. 12.

[4] "Propterea Paracletum misit Dominus, ut quoniam humana mediocritas omnia semel capere non poterat, paulatim dirigeretur et ordinaretur et ad perfectum perduceretur disciplina ab illo vicario Dei, Spiritu Sancto." Tertull. De. Verg. Veland. i.

[5] Inferred from Epiphan. Hær. li. 6.

[6] "Θεος αληθης προαιωνιος." Melito in Routh's Reliquiæ, i. 112; Euseb. Hist. Eccl. v. 26.

[7] "Nos, ut *instructiores per Paracletum*, unicum quidem Deum credimus; sub hâc tamen dispensatione, quam 'œconomiam' dicimus, ut sermo ex ipso processerit, qui deinde miserit a patre Spiritum Sanctum paracletum." Tertull. adv. Prax. ii.

10. *The Monarchy.*

The controversies commencing at the end of the second century, in reference to Monotheism, or, as it was called, "The Monarchy," make it necessary to recall to mind the strictly Unitarian position of the primitive age, which the expansion of Christian sentiment had for some time been gradually forsaking, but which even the fourth Gospel does not wholly renounce. In the early times of Christianity no one thought of making a distinct person out of the divine element or influence constituting the superiority of the Redeemer; the only difference was, as to whether the man Jesus, or the "spirit" inspiring him, was the better entitled to be called "Christ." The anxious defence of Monotheism in the Homilies certainly implies a contemporaneous inclination in the Roman community towards dualism; to deify Christ as a distinct person, while maintaining, as in the letters of Ignatius, the paradoxical tenet of his being at the same time one with the Father and different from Him. This tendency must have prevailed to a considerable extent among the Catholic majority of the age of Victor; and its general acceptance was referred to the pontificate of his successor. Its progress can be little traced; but, however obscure the details of its history, it is certain that even at the close of the second century of the Roman church, it was still immature as a doctrine, and, though gradually working its way to popularity, was often wholly denied. The denial was made in two senses, proceeding either from those who considered Christ to be substantially human, or those who made him undistinguishably divine, as an aspect or undivided effluence of the one God. In the unsettled condition of the general faith, such a denial could not properly be called heresy, since there can be no heresy until orthodoxy has been clearly defined and propounded as such. On the contrary, the Ebionitish reactionists of Rome could appeal with confidence to all the ancient antecedents of their church, whose Unitarianism had probably been the more obstinately maintained on account of its quarrel with Trinitarian Montanism; and it was only their eventual reluctance to advance with the episcopacy and the general tendencies of the age, to acquiesce, for instance, in the anti-Judaical pleadings of Pseudo-Ignatius, that caused them to forfeit the consideration which had otherwise been due to their high church predilections

and skilful advocacy. They seem henceforth to have sunk into obscurity; and the sect of the Artemonites may be regarded as an attempt to revive some of their already antiquated views in regard to the person of Christ; views which now appeared to be a culpable, or even "insane" deviation from the true faith; but which in reality were only a consistent adherence to ancient precedent. The most simple and abrupt form of expressing these views was the assertion of Theodotus ("first author," as he was afterwards called, "of the God-denying apostacy"), that Christ was a mere man, that the Divine Spirit indeed descended on him at baptism, but that this by no means made him a God. Theodotus appealed in support of his assertion to the synoptical Gospels and Old Testament; urging that the Messiah foretold by prophecy was unquestionably human, and that Jesus himself did not profess to be God, but only "Son of God." The Apostles too spoke of Jesus not as God, but as a "man approved by signs and wonders;" even Paul called him "the one mediator, the man Jesus Christ."[1] Soon afterwards the followers of Artemon, though in other respects by no means Judaically inclined, made a more emphatic and elaborate protest on the side of Monotheism. They declared the dogma of Christ's divinity to be of notoriously recent introduction, and claimed ancient indisputable precedent in their own favour. They alleged that all the primitive teachers and the Apostles themselves were strictly monotheistic; that this true faith remained unchanged until the time of Victor, and that it was for the first time falsified under his successor Zephyrinus. The anonymous writer in Eusebius[2] who records these remonstrances, endeavours to refute them by referring to Scripture and to many early writers who had asserted Christ's divinity. But to appeal to Scripture when Scripture was still unformed and fluctuating is evidently inconclusive; and the writer is either not aware, or dishonestly suppresses the fact, that the early writers referred to were many of them of the Asiatic church, or else held the dogma of Christ's divinity in the ancient limited sense of a divine qualification or inspiration, not of a divine essence. The question really in dispute was not whether Christ possessed a divine element, but whether he was a substantially distinct divinity; not about his being "Θεου λογος," but "Θεος λογος." From none of the earlier writers, neither Hermas,

[1] Acts ii. 22; 1 Tim. ii. 5.

[2] Ch. v. 28.

Clement, Justin, nor the "Kerugma Petrou," can the independent divinity of Christ be proved in the latter sense; for although the attribution of a divine quality or angelic virtue to Christ sufficed to warrant the supplemental attribute of his pre-existence, he was by no means thereby elevated to the rank of a subsidiary God, nor is there any evidence of his being distinctly recognised as such even by individual writers until the close of the second century. Justin does not venture to accuse Unitarians of heresy; and Tertullian, in a remarkable passage, fully corroborates their remonstrances as borne out even in his own day by the indisputable aversion of the majority of Christians to all distribution, or, as it was called, "œconomy" of the divine perfections. "The simple," he says, "or rather the fools and dolts, who are always the majority among the faithful, considering the Divine unity to be an article of the true faith, and not clearly apprehending how this unity is to be understood, are frightened at the idea of the œconomy. They find in the numbers and subdivisions of Trinitarian doctrine a negation of unity, although the unity producing out of itself a trinity, is in reality not thereby destroyed, but only apportioned or 'administered.' Hence they pretend that two or even three Gods are preached by us, while they themselves worship the only true God; as if it were impossible that an irrational adherence to unity should be heretical, or that a liberal trinitarian distribution should be consistent with truth. We hold, say they, to the Monarchy."[1] This candid admission is fully confirmed by the Clementine Recognitions, which, written in all respects with a view to church interests, quietly concede the Monarchian argument, as if it were unsafe or impossible to refute it. It is not that the book is heretical, but that the church doctrine was at the time unformed and incomplete; and it is only by the unwarrantable anachronism throwing back the Athanasian Christology to a time when it had no existence, that the Trinitarianism of Tertullian can, in defiance of his own words, be shown to be more orthodox than the scruples of the "dolts and fools" represented by Artemon and Praxeas.

Theodotus is classed by Epiphanius with the reactionary Asiatic sect of the "Alogians," so called not merely because they denied the Logos and the developments of Asiatic Christianity in general, but because a punning application of the

[1] Ad. Praxeam, ch. iii.

word might indicate their presumed infatuation in doing so. Nothing, of course, would appear more senseless and wicked than disagreement with prevailing theological opinion; and the case seemed still more flagrant when the Artemonites presumed to reason about the faith, to criticise the Scriptures, to study Euclid and Galen, Aristotle and Theophrastus.[1] Theodotus was excommunicated by Victor; but it was probably not so much in consequence of his general Monarchian views, as on account of his particular mode of expressing them.

Monarchianism, as already intimated, was twofold, corresponding to the two different views as to the nature of Christ. These were the Christology "from above," and that "from below;" if Christ was human, he was numerically distinct from God, as in the ancient Judaical theology; were he divine, Monotheism would equally be preserved by blending him with the Deity as one nature. So that, while the Trinitarian pioneers of orthodoxy strove to find an impossible compromise between two contradictory propositions, each extreme of the opposed Christological formulas came round by a different path to Monotheism,—one by excluding Christ's personality, the other his apotheosis. Neither party denied the divine element in Christ; they asserted only the primitive faith, that this divine element was not severed from its source by becoming resident in a human subject; and whether the title "Christ" were predicated of the divine or the human constituent, it continued, despite the communication of it, part and parcel of the Supreme Being.[2]

Praxeas, who seems to have visited Rome, like Polycarp, for the purpose of denouncing heresy and stimulating the slumbering intolerance of its bishops, was not personally molested, although, as a Monarchian, he eventually turned out to be a heretic himself. Identifying the divine principle in Christ with the Father, he did not shrink from the inevitable consequence—since termed Patripassianism—that the Father shared the Son's suffering and death;[3] but he admitted this inference only in the same sense, and to the same extent, as the Trinitarians were themselves compelled to admit it in reference to the Logos; a divine personification was equally jeopardised in both cases.

[1] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. v. 28.

[2] According to Beryllus, bishop of Bostra (Euseb. vi. 33), the Lord was not personally pre-existent before his human pilgrimage; he had no peculiar divinity of his own, but only a transitory communication of the Father's.

[3] "Praxeas," says Tertullian, "executed two commissions for the devil in Rome; he expelled the Paraclete, and crucified the Father."

The doctrine of the Smyrniote Noëtus appears to have been intended to meet the difficulty by what really amounts only to a confession of its being one of the incomprehensible mysteries inherent in the Deity, who can become visible or invisible at pleasure; who as the Son suffered death, but who as the Father lives for ever. The theory of Noëtus (or of Praxeas) became popular, and was diffused by Cleomenes in Rome, where, at the close of the second century, it seems to have been the favourite and fashionable creed. Victor, who condemned Theodotus, patronised the views of Praxeas; and the "Patripassian" heresy, as it was afterwards called, was adopted by the two succeeding bishops, Zephyrinus and Callistus. The latter, indeed, was one of its most efficient advocates; and the exasperation against him exhibited by the author of the "Philosophoumena," a man deeply engaged in these dissensions, while exhibiting in a very disreputable manner the factious virulence of a Christian disputant, proves the strength of the party still opposed to the "Ditheists," or introducers of a double God. No wonder that Praxeas, notwithstanding his Unitarianism, should have had sufficient influence at Rome to alter the determination of its bishop at an important crisis[1] if the bishop was Unitarian also. The party controverted in the Homilies must either have stopped short of a distinct subdivision or multiplication of the Deity in regard to Christ, or they must have still been comparatively uninfluential in proportion to the more numerous body, who, however they might revolt at the idea of rescuing the unity by asserting Christ to be a mere man, felt satisfied and safe in acquiescing in the old-established alternative by which Christ's dignity was vindicated while Monotheism was preserved.[2] It would indeed be difficult to imagine that the painfully-elaborate system of Sabellius could have arisen at all in a decidedly Trinitarian age. Sabellius, like Noëtus, tried to show, not that God is one, but that his unity can consist with phenomenal diversity. He compared God to the sun, which in one luminary combines three properties—light, warmth, and rotundity. He gave to the same essentially Unitarian doctrine a more developed Pantheistic or emanational form, explaining how, through the instrumentality of the Logos, as universal

[1] Above, p. 146.

[2] The Second Epistle of Clemens, written towards the end of the second century (Hilgenfeld, Apost. Vater. p. 120), begins by telling its readers, "we ought to think of Christ as of God; as of the judge of quick and dead."

principle of creative movement, the successive dispensations or aspects (προσωπα) of the Divinity were developed out of the silence and repose of the primal monad. God in his secret essence is ever the same; but He had from time to time come forth out of the obscurity of his unrevealed essence under three aspects or expressions of his being, personated respectively as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Each successive phase or aspect was more expanded and diffusive than the preceding one. In the first, the revealed Deity or Logos spoke as a legislator only; in the second He became incarnate as the Son; in the third, which exhibited the closest interpenetration of human and divine, He became, as Holy Ghost, incarnate in individual Christians, intimately blending with mankind, and causing every one to feel a personal consciousness of the spiritual union before exemplified in Christ.

Callistus is said by the writer of the "Philosophoumena" to have excommunicated Sabellius to save appearances; possibly because the latter had indulged in an over-refined speculation; or because he placed the nature which bishop as well as heretic made common to the Father and the Son at an elevation above both. It is easier to account for the condemnation of Paul of Samosata, who had given offence by his personal extravagance and ostentation, and whose theology was of the "κατωθεν" or low type, a development of the Artemonite doctrine of a substantially human Christ. The general tendency of Christianity was to exalt and deify the Being whose personal pretensions were the grand token and guarantee for the validity of its spiritual claims; and if it at last found that it could not afford to dissipate the personal individuality of Christ in the general Divinity, it could still less brook attempts to rationalise the mysteries of its faith by denying his divinity altogether. The Theism of Paul of Samosata is in direct contrast to the Pantheism of Sabellius. Both quoted from the Old Testament the Unitarian dictum, "The Lord thy God is one Lord;" but whereas the latter made the blended divinity and humanity of Christ an aspect or emanation of the Godhead, Paul insisted on the distinct human personality of Jesus, and limited his higher attribute as "Son of God" to moral effort and resemblance. But this resemblance to divine perfection could not have been attained without divine aid; and here Paul had recourse to the Logos, an element seemingly considered at the time indispensable to all Christological theory, referring to it, however, not

as a person, but as the immanent inseparable principle of the Divine thought and consciousness, like the soul in man, elevating Christ's humanity by its influence, and endowing him with celestial qualifications. In the opposed theories of Paul and Sabellius, and the protracted deliberations of the Council (A.D. 265) by which the former was deposed, we reach the climax of theological entanglement, but at the same time discern some symptoms of a clue for our extrication. The occasion called forth greater exactitude of thought and language; and we now meet with a variety of new terms suggested by the technical requirements of the controversy, as well as an unwonted precision in the use of old ones. The unpopularity of the low Christological view (ὁ κατωθεν Χριστος) was unmistakably shown by the opprobrious epithets and aspersions unsparingly heaped upon Paul; for his adversaries themselves admitted[1] that his creed, more than his morals, was in fault; and that, however well founded the scandalous imputations against him, they would not have excited animadversion, or have been openly denounced, had the culprit not been heretical in his opinions, or, as they phrased it, "set himself up in opposition to God."[2]

11. *Origen.*

Controversy only exposed the difficulties of Christological dogma, it could not overcome them. The Monarchians accused the Trinitarians of Polytheism, and in return were stigmatised as Judaisers.[3] The problem was endless; for, supposing it disposed of by an acknowledgment of a personal divinity of the Son concurrent with that of the Father, the assumed plurality of divine persons would at once reproduce all the elements of conflict; since personality implies distinction, distinction a commencement of separate existence; and an existence so commenced and limited were almost a negation of the original supposition, as not only involving alteration or diminution of the Supreme God, but a manifest dis-

[1] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. vii. 30, p. 401, vol. ii.; Ed. Heinichen.

[2] "By betraying the mystery of religion, and parading the execrable heresy of Artemon." Euseb. Hist. Eccl. The sneer with which concludes the extract given by Eusebius from the encyclical letter of the bishops gives no very high notion of their amenity of character.

[3] Tert. agt. Praxeas, xxxi.

similarity and inferiority in the derivative one. This difficulty was felt in full force by the Alexandrian Fathers, who, while eagerly adopting the transcendental God of Plato,[1] vainly sought an intelligible basis of union between their correspondingly elevated Logos-idea and historical Christianity. So incapable was Clemens of making the "brightness of God's glory and express image of his person" coalesce with the incarnate Christ, that he was accused of introducing a double Logos, or, in another construction of the inconsistency, of teaching "Docetism." The same ambiguity occurs in his disciple Origen, whose system, founded upon incompatable data, may be said to be an extension of the quarrel of the "high" and "low" Christologies to the sphere of the universe. It is throughout a struggle between Christian feeling and Greek philosophy; between the God of speculation and the God of human sympathies; between the Logos identical with God and the Christ who sojourned among men. On one side he presents us with an absolute and infinite God sitting incomprehensibly in solitary abstraction with a perfectly identical co-eternal Son, his "word" or "thought;" on the other, we have a real determinate world, a God surrounded by a variety of separated being, and, to a certain extent, limited in his essence by that separation. On the whole, however, there is a decided reaction from the excessive exaltation of the Logos-idea of Clemens. Admitting the postulate indispensably required by Christian feeling of the Son's personality, Origen feels obliged to confess also his inferiority, it being impossible to imagine two beings alike absolute and alike divine. But while carefully separating the Logos, or Son, from the Supreme Being ("ὁ Θεος," or "αυτοΘεος")[2] as an inferior God ("Θεος," or "δευτερος Θεος"),[3] or as only relatively divine, he tries to balance the concession by making him the only begotten from eternity, thus not only exalting the Son, but excluding emanation and change from the attributes of the Father. As co-eternal with the Father, the Son would share in one respect at least the Father's nature; and since it was impossible to conceive any moment of time at which God began to be what He now is, or when He began to possess his inherent perfec-

[1] "Επεκεινα πασης ουσιας." [2] Comment. on John, vol. ii. 2.

[3] Celsus, v. 39. The Holy Ghost is a still lower personage, created, like the rest of inferior beings, by the Son; and the three persons together form a graduated scale of divine intelligences like the more numerous Æons of the Gnostics.

tions, it was on this account alone indispensable to make his attribute of paternity as well as of creation aboriginal, and to consider him the eternal Father of an eternal Son. How or why He became a Father is not clear. Whether it was a generation out of the substance or a creation of the will, whether the Son's relation be fortuitous and external, or essential and necessary, is not distinctly specified. Generation out of the substance would imply diminution of the substance; and production by an act of will would make the relation to the Father casual and external only. Origen leaves the difficulty undecided; and the same hesitation which attaches to the generation of the Son extends to the general question of the universe. The Creator, he says, can never have been without a creation, nor God without a world. The finite is the necessary evolution of the infinite. But mind, even the divine mind, cannot compass infinitude; God, therefore, created no more at one time than He could at once comprehend and govern, and his unceasing creative energy manifests itself in an endless series of individually finite worlds. The notion of the world[1] coincides with that of the Son or Logos. As the infinite God is manifested in an indefinite series of finite worlds, so the universal reason, ideally one with God, is individualised in a vast variety of rational beings. The system here abandons speculation on the absolute in order to close with the individual and real. The passing of God into objectivity was a free act rather than a necessary evolution of Omnipotence, and freedom alone is appealed to in order to account for the wide diversity in lower spiritual beings. Origen was the first who attempted to give a systematically philosophic form to Christian ideas; but, in so doing, he failed to satisfy either Christianity or philosophy; and the general leaning of his mind towards the philosophic side eventually obliged the church to repudiate the name of one to whom, in many respects, she was greatly indebted. In opposition to the fatalistic naturalism of the Gnostics, the Alexandrian Fathers strove to maintain the principle of moral sentiment founded on free will; but the way in which this principle was developed by Origen shows the essential affinity between the Gnostic and Alexandrian theories, and how impossible it was at the time to philosophise upon a new basis when, quitting the

[1] Of course not the material, but the intelligible, worlds, or "κοσμος νοητος" of Philo and Plato.

convenient confusion and versatility of the Stromata of Clemens, an attempt was made at homogeneity of system. Origen describes the soul as proceeding from God, and created by Him. Its primary condition was one of similarity and union with its Maker; yet the attribute most distinctly evincing this similarity was to the individual the source of estrangement. The independence of action, which in God is necessity, appears in the individualised soul as free will; and, since freedom implies consciousness of separation from the absolute, it may be said to be the origin of the fall, which, indeed, is only another name for this very separation. Nothing could be more contrary to ordinary Christian ideas about the fall of man, his imperfection and responsibility, than a revival of Platonism in which the moral significancy of freedom was merged in cosmical development, and sin was only material contamination arising out of the remote mythical conditions of the transcendental world. The principle of freedom, considered as the absolute originator of rational natures in their state of estrangement from Deity, became the source of a new dualism; and thus Origen reverted in reality to the Gnostic antagonism of mind and matter. For, since he thought there could be no independent incorporeal existence except God, matter was necessary in order effectually to complete the separation supposed to have already occurred in the sphere of mind, as the inevitable adjunct or exponent of the parted spirit; the true antithetic principle was therefore matter, and it was the misuse of freedom which resulted in the production of a world so estranged from the Logos and from God, that its dependence on Omnipotence became reduced to a minimum, and itself, morally speaking, only the purgatory of the soul. But a lingering propensity to good may be assumed in all beings capable of free choice; and the same freedom which signalised the fall of the soul opens the path for its return. The means of this return are supposed to be disclosed in Christianity. The tendency which in other souls only exist relatively, or in a less degree, was absolute in Christ's soul, whose fervour of love, even in its pre-existent state, towards the Logos was such as to cause an intimate interpenetration and union between the two, like that of heat with glowing iron; Christ is thus the way, the door, the soul's true physician; with him begins the possibility of redemption,[1] consisting in the return

[1] With this is blended the notion of a sacrificial redemption or atonement, con-

of the distributed soul or Logos to the consciousness of its true objective universality, or, in other words, the reconcilement of universal reason with itself. This was the meaning of the higher life commenced with Christ; in him the essential oneness of human and Divine was for the first time realised by the subjective reason arriving at a full recognition of its own divinity. Christ considered as a free moral subject must be admitted to have been a human person; and yet, since the divine Being is in reality changeless, and the Logos throughout its manifestations ever unalterably the same, it seems to follow that the incarnation could only have been a concession to human weakness, that, in short, Origen's Christ is really, if not avowedly, "Docetic,"[1] and that the drama of incarnation can only be regarded as the visionary illustration of a process whose real theatre is the mind of man. It was this general fusion of the historical in the speculative, and especially the transference of salvation, that immediate requirement of Christian instinct, to an indefinite future, consisting of an endless perspective of successive worlds,[2] by which Origen gave most umbrage to orthodoxy. He confounds the principle of subordination of the divine persons with that of co-ordination or equality; now he speaks of the Son as of one substance ("ὁμοούσιος") with the Father, as begotten by Him, as light from light, yet neutralises this Athanasian omission by excluding from God every attribute akin to generation or emanation, and proclaiming the unity of persons to be a mere unity or conformity of will.[3] His language thus includes two opposite tendencies; the Sabellian or Athanasian, making Christ of the substance of the Father, and the Arian, viewing him as a creation of the Father's will. The express declarations in the latter sense, coupled with a preponderating anxiety to assign to Christ an inferior and intelligible relation to the supreme Godhead, caused Origen to be regarded by many as precursor or even founder of Arianism.

sisting in the giving of an equivalent to Satan, who, however, was cheated in the transaction, as he found himself incapable of appropriating the pure soul which the divine justice offered to his vindictiveness.

[1] Contr. Cels. iv. 15.

[2] Reprobation, in Origen, is merely the postponement of redemption and grace to some future development of existence, in the course of which all men are ultimately to be saved.

[3] Agt. Celsus, viii. 12, quoting John x. 30.

12. *The Arian Controversy.*

Origen's expedient of balancing eternity against subordination, and so blending together the contradictory requirements of inferiority and equality in the Son, was abandoned by his successors, who, perceiving that a generated being could not be an eternal one, were obliged to confess that there must have been a time when "Christ was not." But this granted, the whole argument as to his divinity, so long and laboriously pleaded for, was overthrown. It was evident that the Son, if really a Son, could not be unbegotten as the Father was. If begotten, he must have had a beginning; an eternal generation was self-contradictory. Moreover the notion of generation, of being parted from the Father's substance, implied corporeity and divisibility; it therefore followed that the Son must be altogether different from the Father and inferior to Him, and, indeed, not generated at all, but created[1] by the Father's will, and created out of nothing. The Logos, or divine element in Christ, was in fact only a higher kind of human soul, modifying but not essentially altering the humanity; and his unity with God was only a moral unity, or perfect coincidence of will. The Alexandrian presbyter Arius, who, in addition to many Gospel citations, appealed to logical reasonings in defence of these Unitarian positions, contravened the evident tendency of his own argument when he still pretended to assert the divinity of Christ, his agency in creation and pre-existence. The Athanasian party availed themselves of the inconsistency, and with the admitted divinity of Christ reclaimed all the more elevated attributes required by Christian sentiment, such as his divine equality and consubstantiality. It was impossible, they said, that a mere creature could be also Creator, or that one who himself had a commencement in time should be anterior to all time. How is it possible to sever the divine creative energy, to suppose for instance that God, finding it beneath his dignity to create the world, created the Son alone, leaving the Son to create other things? And if the Son was not really and substantially God, but only at a certain epoch of time elevated for his virtues to this dignity, he was only a deified man; and then his supposed power of conferring knowledge of God and eternal

[1] According to Prov. viii. 22.

life upon the rest of mankind becomes an idle dream no longer to be seriously entertained. It was clear that Arius, by insisting too rigorously on one of the Christological alternatives, had jeopardised all that was dearest to Christian feeling; and that the attempt to reason about Christ's nature threatened to extinguish its superhuman character altogether. The difficulty could only be met by reuniting the ideas of sonship and eternity, denounced by the Arians as incongruous, and by devising a suitable expression for the ideal coalition. This was effected after the fashion already resorted to by Origen, and common in Catholic theology, of placing two contradictory ideas in juxtaposition, and making the dignity of one attribute neutralise the limitation and inferiority implied by the other; the result was eventually embodied in the Nicene formula, "God of God, light of light, very God out of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance (homousios) with the Father."[1] A mystification like this was of course no answer to logical reasoning, and the only way in which it could be made even seemingly intelligible, was an appeal to the often repeated symbol of a ray of light, the ray being subsequent to the light, yet essentially undistinguishable from it. But then if the Son were as a ray, a property or accident that is of something precedent, his personality was again endangered; and if it were urged that, in the case supposed, the analogy was only approximative, it no longer fulfilled its object of illustration. Either way there was a difficulty; the choice lay between sensational imagery or incomprehensible mysticism; either the personality was sacrificed, or the analogy lost. The doctrine of consubstantiality, or of the "Homousia," was, in fact, the setting all difficulty and reasoning at defiance for the purpose of realising the grand Christian idea of deifying Christ. When first broached it had been decried as "Patripassian" or "Sabellian," *i. e.* as nullifying the Son's personality, and had been on this account formally condemned by the Synod of Antioch (in A.D. 269). Athanasius readily employed the quibbling resources of Catholicism to account for the inconvenient error of the Synod, without prejudice to the general infallibility of the church; but found it less easy to escape the dogmatical dilemma, to keep clear both of Arianism and Sabellianism. With the former he was obliged to acknowledge the distinct personality of the Son; with the latter he pleaded for an essential

[1] The creed concludes with an anathema against all the doctrines of Arianism.

unity with the Father. In dealing with each adversary he took a different attitude, without heeding the inconsistency which denied on one side what it contended for on the other. Had the controversy waited to be honestly decided by argument, it would have been impossible to have ever arrived at an adjudication. But, as in most religious disputes, the predilections of the parties interested determined the issue. Christianity had come victoriously through its struggle with heathenism,[1] and was on the point of becoming the State religion. Its victory, of course, implied that of its favourite idea, *i. e.* the absolute divinity of its Founder. This was upheld by a majority of the bishops who attended the first "œcumenical" or general council convened by Constantine at Nicæa,[2] and the imperial influence overbore the scruples of those who reluctantly accepted an already discredited formula and an obvious self-contradiction. What had before been matter of mere speculative discussion was now a vital interest of the State; the State naturally took part with the hierarchy; and it is the interest of every hierarchy to make religion mystical, and to quell the importunity of reason by claiming implicit deference to an unintelligible faith. It is observable that in proportion as the church was emancipated from rivalry and persecution, its leaders became magisterial and intolerant. It was remarked by a heathen that wild animals did not behave more savagely to one another than the Christians.[3] The plea for liberal treatment made by the infant church that "religion cannot be forced, that it is a matter of words rather than whips, and that faith ceases to be meritorious when ceasing to be voluntary," was forgotten in the season of its success, and we now find a Christian writer[4] imploring the emperors of the day to punish the unconverted with the utmost rigour, and quoting in favour of persecution the inhuman precepts of the Jewish lawgiver,[5] "Thou shalt not spare, neither shall thine eye pity."

13. *The Humanity of Christ.*

Athanasius did not live to see the triumph of his opinions, which continued to be disputed long after the Council of Nice.

[1] Which soon after obtained the nickname of "Paganism," or "the creed of villagers," the persecuted dwellers in holes and corners.
[2] A.D. 325. [3] Amm. Marcellin. xxii. 5.
[4] Firmicus Maternus; see Gieseler's Ch. Hist. i. 2, p. 10. [5] Deut. ch. xiii.

His life alternated between exile and court favour; he was four times banished, and as often, through the fluctuations of imperial opinion, recalled. The emperors were rather organs of general feeling in the matter than theological partisans, and history clearly shows that the course of dogmatical development was not fortuitous, but determined by the instinctive progress of Christian sentiment in its advance from vagueness to precision. It was very generally felt that the public agitation of these abstruse questions, though really nothing more than the open statement of the inherent difficulties of the faith, was ludicrous as well as dangerous; Constantine himself pointed out the policy of reserve,[1] and his son Constantius in the interests of tranquillity would have gladly suppressed discussion altogether, since "God alone," he said, "could know the manner of the begetting of the Son."[2] Yet all parties, lamenting the sad necessity imposed upon them by their rivals, continued the controversy,[3] and Christendom became a Babel of angry recriminations and excommunications. The Arians were branded as polytheistic, and in return taunted their opponents with Tritheism or Sabellianism. To avoid the latter charge, which indeed Athanasius himself had found it difficult to escape, the Eastern church, following Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, tried the middle course of "semi-Arianism," which, reverting to the old expedients of emanation and subordination, substituted the word Homoiousios for Homousios, or "similarity" to God in place of "equality." It would be tedious to follow all the minor hair-splittings of the question, the court intrigues, the vacillation of synods, the bitter persecutions, the reconciliation of opponents by means of some neutral form of enigmatical expression, and the severance of associates in theory on account of differences in practice. Even after the Emperor Theodosius had proclaimed Athanasianism to be the sole legitimate faith,[4] and the Council of Constantinople[5] had settled the form of our present "Nicene" creed, the difficulty which had occurred in the case of the Son had to be encountered over again in that of the Holy Ghost, and fresh questions arose as to whether Christ had a human

[1] Gieseler, i. 2, p. 47.

[2] De quo scriptum est, "generationem ejus quis enarrabit." Gieseler, ib. i. 2, p. 58.

[3] Gieseler, i. 2, p. 43, n.

[4] All other opinions he declared to be impious and mad, to be followed by divine vengeance and imperial displeasure. Gieseler, ib. p. 74.

[5] A.D. 381.

soul besides his divine one, and as to what might be the correct idea of the relation between these two constituents, whether they were to be considered as blended in the unity of person, or the personality were to be sacrificed to the dualism of the natures. The desired union of finite and infinite in Christ, was attained only when to his divinity was added the idea of his perfect humanity. A bodily Redeemer had always been deemed as essential for this purpose as a divine one, but the character and completeness of the humanity varied in different theories, and the difference which had existed in this respect between Ebionites and Gnostics, or between the two classes of Monarchians, was revived in the fourth century between the schools of Antioch and Alexandria. Against the docetism of the early Gnostics, who, to preserve the celestial nature of Christ from material taint made his corporeity a mere phantasm, it had been successfully urged that if Christ did not come in the flesh, the salvation effected by him was no better than a dream; and it was now further insisted that he must have had the soul as well as the body of humanity, it being essential (as already argued by Tertullian and others[1]) that he should share the exact nature he came to save. All the earlier Christian teachers had assumed the spiritual part of Christ to be his divinity; the idea of an additional human soul was first broached by Tertullian, and became the subject of an elaborate theory with Origen. By the Arians this human soul was not required; since, if Christ were an essentially subordinate being, the more ancient and general notion making the Logos itself to be Christ's soul, partaking as such all his earthly affections and mutations, exactly agreed with their theory. Nor did Athanasius at first supply one, although, by stipulating for the immunity of the Logos from all the sufferings, imperfections, &c., of Jesus, he was compelled to cancel either the sufferings, or the conscious nature of the sufferer. For if the Logos did not suffer, there could be no conscious sufferer; and if the sufferings were wholly overcome, and the human nature raised above them by the divinity, Christ was the mere phantom Redeemer of the Docetists. In regard to the profession of ignorance in Mark (xiii. 32), Athanasius could only explain that Christ, although by no means really ignorant about the matter referred to, uttered no untruth, because he here spoke not as God, but as man; but then if he had no human soul, there was no conscious

[1] De Carne Christi, ch. v.

subject of which ignorance could be truly predicated; so that at last it became necessary to confess that he feigned ignorance in order to avoid troublesome questions. Athanasius probably foresaw that two spiritual natures perilled the personal unity of Christ; but he afterwards found this objection less dangerous than the denial of his full humanity by Apollinaris, bishop of Laodicea. Apollinaris took an objection which applies to all the later orthodox Christology, that "very God" could not blend in one with "very man," since man is a self-determining agent, and therefore to superadd divinity to man would be to make not one, but two agents. Nor was it any answer to say that this reasoning held good only in material things, of which certainly two could not occupy the space of one; for the question was not of spaces and dimensions, but of consciousness and thought; man was a conscious being and so was God; they could not blend as persons into one conscious being, each preserving his own separate perfection. It seemed impossible to Apollinaris to add Deity to a being already so complex as man, consisting, as usually supposed, of body, soul, and spirit, and he therefore dropped the spirit as clearly redundant in the composition. Gregory of Nyssa replied that the humanity of Christ, if destitute of soul, was no humanity at all; that Christ's human agency was on this supposition a mere sham; and what mattered it, he cried, to say that the divinity took the place of a soul? The question was as to the humanity, and there could be no real humanity without its noblest part. Apollinaris was not answered, but the exigencies of Christian sentiment prevailed, and the church, substituting a qualitative adjustment for a quantitative one, decided that Christ comprised not indeed two beings, but certainly two natures.

The problem so stated contains a double inference; the combination of the natures, and the separate perfection of each nature. Hence two different methods of treating it, corresponding respectively to the mystical or the logical tone of mind, and varying with the proportionate importance attached to one or the other point. If unity were chiefly kept in view, the natures would hardly be preserved; and if perfection of the natures were insisted on, there was danger of infringing the unity. This alternative became conspicuous in the antagonistic relation of the schools of Alexandria and Antioch; the mystic would unite, the more logical theologian would treat two as two. The efforts of the Alexandrian theologians, based on the

philosophy of Plato and of Origen, had from the first taken the direction of transcendental speculation about God, their final result being the Trinitarian "Homousia." In this association of divine persons there was properly no room for a substantive humanity, which indeed could rationally consist only with Unitarianism. This inherent incongruity modifies in different ways the general Christian postulate of a combination of the two natures. Gregory of Nyssa declared that although there were certainly two natures in Christ, yet the human was so absorbed in the divine, that, like a drop in the ocean, it was impossible to distinguish it; whereas Theodore of Mopsuestia described the union of natures as a sort of association, in which the predicates of one member might allowably be transferred to the other. The school of Antioch, commencing with Paul of Samosata, strove to find a basis for theology in the real; and only after determining Christ's human character ventured to speculate upon his divinity. Although distinguished from Alexandrianism by its more rational and positive character, its chief teachers (Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia) seem to have offered no opportunity for angry impeachment. This occurred for the first time when Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople and a disciple of Theodore, objected to the epithet Θεοτοκος (mother of God), as applied to the Virgin Mary. He said that the only precedent to be found for such language was the heathen mythology; that a creature cannot bring forth the creator, or indeed anything older than itself; and that the proper term should have been "Mother of Christ," or rather "mother of man," since, according to St. Paul (or rather the author of "Hebrews"[1]), Christ had no mother. His vigilant enemy, the Alexandrian patriarch Cyril, seized the occasion for accusing him of unduly dividing Christ by separating the natures; and Nestorius anathematised Cyril for confounding them. The latter, in order more effectually to injure his opponent, accused him before the Roman bishop as a virulent Pelagian, and of making Christ a mere man; the consequence was his immediate condemnation, Cyril taking the pains to declare in a series of deliberate anathemas (a common form at the time of expressing opinions as to the faith) what he considered to be the true reading of the dogma in question. In the course of these disgraceful transactions, in which Nestorius fell a victim to his unscrupulous adversary, the latter signed

[1] Ch. vii. 3.

a confession of faith amounting to a retractation of all he had before asserted, and an admission of the merely personal motives of his conduct. The strife was renewed when Eutyches, supported by Alexandrian influence, maintained the unity of the two natures subsequent to their combination in Christ, an idea declared heretical under the name of "Monophysitism" by the Council of Chalcedon,[1] which determined the said two natures to be permanently distinct, and established the Christological formula, "perfect God and perfect man, consisting of a reasonable soul and human flesh;" "and yet they are not two, but one Christ."

14. *The Monophysites and Monothelites.*

It seems strange that, whereas in the Trinity it was thought advisable to unite three persons in one nature or Being, in the case of the Son, two natures or beings should be thrown into one person. Reason requires that God should be only one; but Christian sentiment made it necessary to distinguish in Christ the two elements which it desired to unite. The Monophysites not unreasonably thought the two abiding natures of the Chalcedon decree to amount to a severance of the person, and would not trust the enigmatical assurances of the church to the contrary against the evidence of their own senses. They approved the condemnation of Eutyches as guilty of docetism; yet held that the coalition with divinity in Christ must have altered the condition of his humanity, arguing, that had he been a real man, Mary could not have continued to be a virgin.[2] These discords, which continued for centuries, gave occasion for innumerable anathemas, and we look in vain for the boasted influence of the religion of peace and good-will amidst the endless jealousies of disputants. The Henoticon, or conciliatory decree of Zeno the Isaurian, was a concession to the Monophysites which produced an exchange of anathemas between the patriarchs of Rome and Constantinople,[3] and a separation of the churches; and the Emperor Anastasius, despairing of any theoretical agreement, confined himself to the office of constable among the rioters in

[1] A.D. 451. [2] Timotheus "αιλουρος" in Gieseler, i. 2, p. 351.
[3] Felix, the Roman bishop, damned Acacius for ever and ever — "Nunquam anathematis vinculis exuendus." Gieseler, i. 2, p. 358, n.

hopes of maintaining the peace. Another luckless attempt on the part of the Greek Emperor Heraclius, in the seventh century, to conciliate the Monophysites, only revived all the rancour of the original quarrel. The Emperor thought that by supposing a unity of will in the person compounded of two natures, he was conceding all that the Monophysites really wanted. But then this concession would have been inconsistent with the hypothesis of two natures, and was therefore opposed by the majority, who decided that there are in Christ not only two natures, but two wills; the latter, however, not contrary, but in exact harmony with one another. The will, it was argued, is not a personal quality (for then it would be necessary to suppose three wills in the Trinity),[1] but one belonging to the nature, and Christ spoke sometimes in his human, sometimes in his divine character. But then a duality of will almost inevitably entails a duality of person, since it is impossible that the will or thought of the finite can be supposed exactly to tally with that of the infinite.

15. *Augustin and Pelagianism.*

The Western church took comparatively little interest in the metaphysical disputes of the Eastern. It seemed, like the old Romans, to have relinquished speculation, in order to concentrate its attention on perfecting its government. Less divided within itself, and directed by an arbitrary central authority, its chief wielded a power which often exercised decisive influence over the theological contentions of its rival. Indeed, one of the Popes[2] in a letter to the Patriarch of Constantinople, expressly abjured the dangerous subtleties of Trinitarian controversy, and sagely observed that such inquiries were matters for grammarians rather than for Christians. Eventually, however, it gave birth to a theological doctrine of its own, characteristic of its peculiar predilections. This was mainly the work of Augustin, whose system was well adapted to be the doctrinal code of ecclesiastical absolutism, and whose voluminous writings were the chief text-books of the mediæval theologians.

Although, through the decisions of councils, dogma was ever

[1] An idea, says Pope Agatho, which seems profane and too absurd.
[2] Honorius I. See Schroeckh's K. Geschichte, vol. xx. p. 401.

becoming more precise, and the circle of allowable discussion narrower, there still remained open an ample field of theological inquiry, and provided a man was orthodox in regard to the Son and the Trinity, he might think and say what he pleased about the origin of the soul, the resurrection and judgment, divine retribution, and many other things. Among these were the important topics of the relative position of man, the nature of sin and evil, and the subjective conditions of salvation. Freedom of will, and also the necessity of grace to counteract the effects of human depravity, had always been vaguely admitted. That in order to rescue man from the consequences of the Fall his own will must co-operate with God's grace, was the general doctrine of the early Latin as well as Greek church. This necessarily followed from the manner in which the two determining conditions, predestination and moral free agency, mingle in the New Testament; apparently warranting by their irregular association reliance indifferently on either or on both. The Fathers held both to be necessary. No one, they said, is forced to accept salvation, nor does grace anticipate free choice; it is for us to will and choose, for God to aid and give effect to our good intentions. To those passages in St. Paul[1] which seem to refer everything to divine election, they opposed others assuming human independence,[2] sometimes even altering the text in order to accommodate the meaning. But since it is difficult to reconcile the apparent contrast of freedom and necessity, human choice and divine prearrangement, there was generally an undue bias to one side of the alternative, the Greek church insisting especially on free will, while the less self-relying genius of the Latin learned from Tertullian to lean submissively upon grace, and to look on sin as the inherited corruption of human nature.

The opinions of Augustin bear the impress of his life. His early years were a long struggle between passion and conscience. The impetuosity with which he at first abandoned himself to worldly pleasures was fortunately restrained by the remonstrances of his mother, and he began to employ himself more usefully by teaching rhetoric at Carthage. While so doing he fell among the Manichæans, whose explanations of the origin of evil interested his imagination, and suggested an excuse for his frailties. But dissatisfied with these, and having understood from Archbishop Ambrose at Milan, that certain passages in the Old Testament which offended reason might be

[1] As Rom. ix. 16; comp. 2 Tim. ii. 20. [2] Origen de Princip. iii. 1, 22.

satisfactorily explained in a spiritual or "non natural" sense, he began to conceive hopes of finding repose for his soul within the church. His rebellious nature, however, continued to lead him astray, until some casual words which he took for a celestial admonition gave strength to his better determinations, so that he began assiduously to read the Scriptures, especially St. Paul, and to lead a life of devout retirement and study.

In the character of churchman he now assumed that every seeming instance of contrariety between reason and revelation must be a mistake. In such cases either the reasoning, he thought, must be false, or the rendering of the text inaccurate. He did not, however, counsel the slavish adherence to the letter practised by the school of Antioch,[1] but claimed an inward inspiration attesting and confirming the external, and declared that he would not believe the Bible itself if unsanctioned by the church. He thought, with Cyprian, that no one can have God for his Father who has not the church for his mother; that none can be saved as belonging to Christ except the recognised members of his body. Everything without the church he held to be accursed, and even the virtues of the heathen to be specious sin. In earlier life he had devoted himself with ardour to the study of philosophy, doing full homage to the merits of the Greek masters, and valuing reason above authority as an avenue to wisdom. But when salvation and the interests of souls and of the church became the grand objects of his attention, he drew back from what he now found to be at least suspicious and untrustworthy. He did not absolutely repudiate philosophy, which he admitted to have anticipated many truths, and to have moreover supplied the resources of dialectics and rhetoric employed by himself in his speculations. But he looked on it as inferior and subsidiary only; it had mistaken the true end, or the true means of reaching what could only be attained through Jesus Christ.

The instinctive mistrust always more or less evinced by Christianity for profane learning, was evidently degenerating into hostility; and its speculations became in consequence more strictly confined to the limited circle of its own ideas. From its original consciousness of blended deprivation and felicity, the sense of present poverty combined with the pro-

[1] Eusebius, Bishop of Emesa, used to say, "would that we were contented with Scripture alone, believing Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, without prying into things that are not recorded!" Gieseler, i. 2, p. 92.

spect of an ideal superabundant wealth, it had been led to an intense and prolonged study of the divine object typifying both its humiliation and its hope, endeavouring to discover its own explanation within the triune nature of the Godhead. The attention which had before been thus almost exclusively directed to the objective study of God, the Logos, and the Trinity, reverted, in Augustin, with passionate earnestness to the problems of the moral feelings, substituting anthropological speculation for theological, and striving to secure peace of conscience by a more intense self-abandonment to the subjective conditions of the faith. With a success very different from Origen's, Augustin undertook to form the manifold results of Christian thought into system; but the doctrine occupying in his system the foremost place, and giving unity to the whole, is based on the peculiar sense in which the notion of estrangement is brought home to the conscience under the form of sin. Sin considered as original and hereditary, had become a part of man's nature. Its subtle poison had so penetrated all the recesses of his being, that he no longer, as with Origen, possesses in himself the means of restoration by means of his own free energies. The deep depravity thus rendering the natural man absolutely incapable of good, and which Augustin refers chiefly to the evil concupiscence which had been a stumbling-block to himself, he ascribes to the Fall, through which the moral and physical perfection of man's original condition was forfeited. All that henceforth he can have of good or of real freedom of choice depends on divine grace, which, guided, of course, by church manipulation, arbitrarily confers on some, without merit on their part, conversion and salvation, while the rest of mankind retain their natural corruption, and by an inscrutable decree are left to eternal damnation.

Most of the recognised dogmas of the church took their determinate form in the course of polemical controversy. Pelagius and Celestius, two monks resident at Rome, earnestly advocated the doctrine of free-will, in order to encourage individual morality. They took umbrage at certain words of Augustin in his "Confessions"[1] addressed to God: "Give what thou commandest, and command what thou pleasest;" for, they said, if God himself effects in us by means of his grace what He enjoins us to do, the injunction is idle; it is addressed to his grace rather than to us, and we are no longer

[1] Ch. x. 29.

responsible agents. Surely his commands are addressed to us, *i.e.* to our will, which is then aided by grace to obey them. Celestius taught that grace is conferred in proportion to desert, and is, therefore, itself dependent on free-will; for, though right action may suppose the co-operation of grace, right intention must and ought to precede it. Pelagius denied "original" or inherited sin, limiting the evil effects of the Fall to evil example. Man, he said, is required to be sinless; consequently he ought to have the means of being so, and his free-will is the high and inalienable privilege of his nature. It is the property of all men; but is conjoined with better facilities and aids of grace in Christianity alone. Grace may be either the advantage derived from Christ's teaching and example, the forgiveness of sin, or the divine assistance; but then this assistance is not, according to Pelagius, a direct influence over the will, but only an aid for enlightening the understanding. Distinguishing faculty, will, and act, the first alone, he thought, is from grace, the others depend on man himself. Augustin replied, that St. Paul, as if foreseeing these errors, had, in Philip. ii. 13, expressly contradicted them, ascribing to God the very qualities which Pelagius referred to man. Moreover grace addresses not the understanding only, but the will; its action is direct, supernatural, and "prevenient;" it is indispensable for emancipating man from his innate disposition to evil, as well as for determining him in the way of good. Augustin had at first allowed to free-will an initiative of faith or good intention; and certainly it was Adam's liberty of choice which gave occasion for his fall. But since the Fall, and the consequent corruption of human nature, man, he said, is utterly incapable of willing anything good; it is God alone who enables him both to will and to do. God foresaw the Fall; and though He did not will it, He did not oppose it. It was necessary, in order to exhibit to the full extent the perfection of his own nature, his mercy and justice, and his power of changing evil into good. There are many things appearing indisputably real and certain to the superficial eye of man, which in the higher view of Omnipotence exist not. Evil is one of these;[1] it is not an effect, but a defect; without it, as in a picture without shadows, there could be no beauty, no adequate appreciation of

[1] This is no doubt said against the Manichæists; but Augustin finds moral evil to be an inexplicable enigma, and, in fact, returns to Manichæism. See Ritter's Christ. Philos. ii. 356, 358; and the Tübingen Theol. Magazine, vol. v. pp. 93, 96.

good. Notwithstanding this, the evil consequences of the Fall, in Augustin's view, were such that God would have been perfectly justified in destroying the whole human race; and man ought, therefore, to be thankful that his Maker had predetermined to save a select few from the fate justly merited by all. And if the Fall were advantageous for the display of the divine attribute of mercy in effecting a redemption, the limitation of mercy to a few was equally well calculated to exalt the idea of divine justice; and also advantageous to the elect in making them more acutely feel their own demerit in the punishment of those who, perhaps, were not intrinsically worse than themselves.

In this gloomy hypothesis, suggested partly by St. Paul, but mainly recommended, no doubt, by the melancholy experience of its author, everything reposes on the inscrutable decrees of God. He has mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth; He is as the potter, forming vessels capriciously to honour or dishonour. The earlier Fathers had construed the texts asserting predestination in the sense of a conditional decree, or mere foreknowledge on the part of God; the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, for instance, was explained as permissive or temporary, and election was still dependent on preliminary free-will. Augustin, by assuming an absolute, irrevocable decree, excluded all men from the free exercise of will except the first who so fatally abused it. None of Adam's posterity could do right without grace; their freedom was only a freedom in the way of mischief; nor, on the other hand, could any of the truly elect[1] go wrong: an arbitrary dispensation, not only in itself contradictory (since the all-subjugating decree must have preceded the assumed free-will of Adam), but unworthy of a good God, nay, of a good man; it was, in fact, fate under the name of favour; in the first instance subverting free choice by a necessity of evil, and afterwards by a necessity of good. Even Augustin did not venture to adopt these doctrines without qualification; and however acceptable they may have been to the church, as holding the arbitrary stewardship of divine grace, they were far less so to the monks, whose ascetic practices they robbed of their value. Hence there arose among the monks of Southern France the modified view afterwards called semi-Pelagian, which, resolving predestination into

[1] The irresistible grace, "Secundum propositum vocati." Rom. viii. 28.

prescience, and uniting grace with free-will, bore a close resemblance in these respects to earlier Christianity. Grace was admitted to be necessary, but the germs of good were still alive in the heart, and the purpose of God was not to save a few only, but all.[1] About a century after the commencement of these controversies,[2] a mild form of Augustinism was approved as orthodox at a synod assembled in France; yet semi-Pelagianism was still taught, and the church in general held a middle course between the predestinarian and Pelagian extremes.

Every system of Christian speculation supposed an antagonism, and the removal of that antagonism; a fall and a reconcilement. But in none of these systems was either the one alternative or the other intelligibly accounted for; and, in general, they may be said to amount only to a more or less fanciful variation in expressing the notions which were the basis of the original assumption. Origen could not be said to have solved the difficulty, when, placing himself aloof from Christian feeling, he imagined a universe nominally free, but acting mechanically in an incessant oscillation between matter and spirit, without any adequate motive for its commencement, or satisfactory explanation of its end; the general human feeling of imperfection and short-coming, out of which the whole question had arisen, being little interested in a metaphysical byplay only remotely connected with its internal aspirations and experiences. The Trinitarian controversy may be considered as merely a new form of expressing the original sentiment. Here the subjective Christian feeling was transferred to the divine essence; within which, as in a solemn theatre, the drama of the soul's estrangement and return was variously represented by different theorists: one party under the symbol of a humanised Christ, unconsciously portraying the more repulsive aspect of the problem in the unquestionable fact of human alienation; while the other, under the guise of the Sabellian or Athanasian formulas, too exclusively pressed the intuitive consciousness of divine reunion. It was, however, found impossible to preserve a satisfactory medium in the management of the two sides of the proposition: either the unity of God or man's reality was sacrificed; the process of redemption was either wholly lost sight of, or inadequately carried out. The system of Augustin

[1] According to 1 Tim. ii. 4, and Rom. vii. 18.

[2] A.D. 529.

presents in many respects the strongest contrast to that of Origen. It represents more exactly and literally the Christian feeling of deficiency and separation, which it explains, not, as in the Trinitarian controversy, by referring to the metaphysical, but to the moral attributes of the Deity. The antagonism here returns to its original starting-point of moral sentiment; which representing God as just on one hand and gracious on the other, assigns to man a ballanced allotment of partial election or reprobation. The chasm left by sin is indeed filled up; but the means employed satisfy neither the understanding nor the conscience. Why should a gracious God, if able to save, not extend to all his saving grace? or why, if just, should He not execute upon all the just sentence incurred by their hereditary depravity? The grace and the reprobation are alike arbitrary and unaccounted for; and the whole hypothesis is little more than a modified Manichæism, transferring the partial and tyrannical dealing of the church to the divine government of the world. The pretended explanation is really only an appeal to unlimited authority and a recommendation of unreasoning submission. In the presence of the church speculation became dumb, and the religious feelings obtained a temporary respite; but the pause was only temporary, and was purchased by sacrificing all the freedom and faculties which dignify man.

PART VI.

RISE OF THE PAPACY.

PART VI.

RISE OF THE PAPACY.

1. *Decay of Learning.*

THE mental history of the middle ages circles round a single object, the church. As ancient Rome with its arts and literature declined, the church rose to importance and supremacy. It was, indeed, a result and a symptom of that decline; and religion, rapidly degenerating under incompetent management, became a step to still lower degradation. The only class at Rome having any pretensions to education were the heathen; and the ancient civilisation gradually disappeared with the forms of worship and government with which it had been associated. A new kingdom, but not an improved one, was rising out of the ruins of the old, and the invasion of Alaric, invidiously pointed at as the consequence of Christianity by its enemies, suggested to Augustin the idea of his "City of God." In the general disorganisation of the time, there was little encouragement for literature, and to neglect was added aversion among the monks, who decried worldly accomplishments altogether. Jerome dreamed that he was whipped before the divine judgment-seat for wasting too much time on Cicero, and Gregory the Great declared it to be a shame to tie sacred oracles to rules of grammar, and to hear the praises of Jove and of Christ proceed from the same lips. Misery and dismay, the decay of ancient institutions and impending fall of the empire, made the mind a prey to every debasing superstition. The few who, like the Emperor Julian, wished to stem the inundation of intellectual as well as physical barbarism, took refuge in philosophy, and this the Christians felt instinctively to be inimical to their profession. Synesius, a philosopher and a bishop, openly admitted the incompatibility

of the two callings; and Jerome said truly, "Confessio Trinitatis est ignoratio scientiæ;" those who confess the Trinity must bid farewell to science. The polemical disputations about this subject which occupied the attention of the more educated members of the Greek church, were no more calculated to enlarge the intellectual faculties than to promote the true interests of religion; and even the logical acuteness developed during the process ceased to be of value when authority took the disputed matter into its own hands, when, for instance, it was dogmatically declared by the church that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost together, were neither greater nor more than the Father alone. The literary controversy between heathenism and Christianity was rather a superficial appeal to prejudice and passion, than a trial of impartial criticism and learning; and the writings on the anti-Christian side were, shortly after their composition, deliberately destroyed by the barbarous piety of the emperors. In vain the Roman Senate pleaded on behalf of the religion with which the old republic had reconquered the world. In Alexandria, the accomplished Hypatia was cruelly murdered by the accomplices of a Christian bishop; and the cause of the new religion was most undeservedly promoted by the ignorant disappointment of a heathen multitude, who expected that the destruction of the Serapeion by a Christian mob would have been immediately followed by a return of chaos. The unsuccessful attempt of Julian proved how inevitable was the change which Constantine had anticipated, and which may be said to have been consummated, when an edict of the intolerant Justinian (A.D. 529) closed at Athens the last asylum of heathen learning.

2. *Externalism of the Church.*

Constantine's conversion made a great change in the relative condition of the Christians. Suddenly raised from a persecuted sect to be the predominant, if not the more numerous party, they were richly remunerated for their tribute of political influence by the liberality of the emperors. The Christian churches succeeded to the inheritance of Paganism, and were endowed with the confiscated wealth of heretics and heathens. Under these circumstances, great multitudes became converts who were actuated only by sordid motives of self-interest. In

addition to the power of holding property and many valuable immunities, the Christians had the privilege, in several cases, of a special jurisdiction; and the rights of arbitration, moral censorship, and supervision of the poor, which had been already exercised by the bishops, had a very different significance in the hands of an established hierarchy holding a sort of tribunitian power, and issuing sentences of excommunication against the highest officers of the State.[1] These boons attracted many to the priesthood who were unqualified for it, and it was precisely at this time that the clergy began to set up specific pretensions in contradistinction to the laity. They treated the Christian church as heir of the Jewish temple, and applied the Levitical ordinances to themselves. Spiritual offices became the object of an unseemly competition, the hypocritical candidates pretending all the while to be coerced into accepting their appointments.[2] The bishops began to put forth claims of superiority to the civil magistrates; they were addressed as "most holy," "most reverend," "most blessed Lords;" even emperors, ere long, were expected to bow to them and wait on them.[3] "As the soul surpasses the body in dignity, so," say the Apostolical Constitutions, "does the priestly surpass the kingly power;" and Gregory of Nazianzus addresses the rulers of the State in terms often afterwards repeated: "The law of Christ places you under the authority of our chair; for we, too, are in authority; nay, a higher authority than yours; unless, indeed, the spirit is to serve the flesh, and heavenly things earthly." They summoned the civil functionary to obey them on pain of an excommunication, which not only deprived the intractable of the consolations of religion, but of food and shelter.[4] This power was effectually promoted by the progress of centralisation. The aristocracy of presbyters had given place to the spirit of monarchy, and the bishops decided in their assemblies, or synods, every disputed question of creed or law, as sole representatives of the spiritual authority of their respective churches. Each member of the synod had originally an equal voice; but the city bishops imitated the example of the great metropolitan prelates in usurping authority over those of the country, so that the scale of dignity ascended gradually from the provincial bishop to the

[1] Gieseler, i. 2, 168. [2] Gieseler, i. 2, 312. [3] Gieseler, i. 2, 176, n.
[4] See the excommunications issued by Athanasius, Synesius, and Cyril, in Gieseler, i. 2, 168, n. 8.

diocesan, and from the diocesan to the metropolitan or patriarch. Even of these, some were distinguished above others by political or other accidents; and, in the middle of the fifth century, the whole episcopacy of the East had become subject to the four leading sees of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem; among which the patriarch of Constantinople, notwithstanding his want of apostolical antecedents, eventually attained pre-eminence. But under the control of the empire, a Christian bishop could only be the head of a privileged class. The emperors convened councils, influenced, and often decided, episcopal elections, and even interposed their authority in matters of doctrine. They had, too, the often difficult task of acting as umpires in ecclesiastical squabbles, and of deciding which side was to be considered the true church; the latter, of course, exhibiting in return profuse loyalty to its imperial patron, while there were no bounds to the revolutionary licence of the losers.[1] Under immediate court restraint, the Eastern Patriarchate never advanced beyond the condition of an adjunct to the State. It was otherwise at Rome. The great metropolis, immemorially accustomed to domination, communicated its ambitious instincts to the prelates, who, less controlled by State influence, and less disturbed by internal disputes than elsewhere, presided over the only church which, in the West, had apostolical pretensions. After the severance of the empire in A.D. 395, and still more during the barbarian incursions, the Roman See, ascribing to Peter what in reality it owed to its own local position, became more and more independent, and its suffragan bishops and people more inured to look on it as their head. Its claims were favoured as well by the emperors, as by the liberal treatment of the Ostrogothic monarchs, and, in imitation of the practice in civil cases, it began to send dictatorial rescripts or "decretals" to its subject provinces. Its precedency was enlarged and confirmed under Leo the Great, who (A.D. 445) prevailed on the Emperor Valentinian the Third to acknowledge the Roman pontiff as supreme head of the Western church; and when the empire of the West was destroyed,[2] and the conquest of Upper Italy by the Lombards (568) had subverted Byzantine influence at Rome, its bishops proceeded unchecked with their ambitious projects. The Gothic king, Theodoric, allowed a Roman Synod to proclaim its absolute immunity

[1] Gieseler, i. 2, 179, n. 10. [2] A.D. 476.

from lay interference; Gelasius I. declared that Peter's successor owned no earthly superior, and from the time of Gregory the Great,[1] the dependence of the Roman primate was little more than nominal.

The familiar name of Papa (father), already a common episcopal appellation, was specifically appropriated by him, as that of Patriarch had been by his rival at Constantinople. His temporal power, first called into action by the necessity, in the unprotected state of Italy, of exercising the functions of government and providing for self-defence against the Lombards, was a natural consequence of the spiritual, and this again was largely increased by the accession of the Gothic and Teutonic nations to Catholicity. The missionary labours of Augustin and Boniface (Winfried) among the Anglo-Saxons and Germans, were carried on in the interests of Roman supremacy. In support of it, the popes appealed not to synods and emperors, but to Peter and Christ; they reminded the Frankish kings that the heavenly keys were an heir-loom of fearful import intrusted to their keeping. The general ignorance encouraged their usurpations by making it difficult to expose them; and they were thus induced to bring forward forged documents to give a semblance of right to their exorbitant claims, *e. g.* the pretended donation of Constantine to Sylvester, making over to him the Western Empire. For a layman to question the morality and actions of a priest was, according to the high-church pretensions of Cyprian, to question God himself who had appointed them, to rebel against Christ and against the Gospel.[2] Yet the clergy, even in the golden days of the primæval church, were little entitled by their conduct to any extraordinary consideration. Jerome describes them as legacy hunters who devoured widows' houses and pandered to the vilest lusts. Seated at the bedside of an aged invalid, they hypocritically assumed the assiduity of the nurse, and professed to hope that he felt better, but trembled at the appearance of the physician. It was even found necessary to enact a law forbidding churchmen to frequent the houses of widows and orphans, and making void the gifts or legacies obtained by their exuberant displays of affectionate interest. The sleek ecclesiastic, sprung from the dregs of poverty, had become an epicure who could make dainty distinctions in gastronomy; who, if a layman was notoriously

[1] A.D. 600. [2] Gieseler, i. 1, 368.

hospitable, just, and generous, raised an outcry against him as an undutiful son of the church, as if it were wrong for any other to do what had been so grievously neglected by himself.[1] The moral influence of such a teacher could not be very salutary. The Christian mind was strongly impressed with the paramount importance of religion; but it was religion considered above and apart from ordinary human interests, not as intimately united with them. Church religion was gross and external; overvaluing all those palpable outward demonstrations which powerfully influence the superstitious, but which really arrest the wholesome extension of its influence to the conduct and the heart. As debtors to the foolish as well as to the wise, the priests, despairing, or perhaps incapable, of using spiritual means, had recourse to carnal; so that magnificent churches, rich vessels, and all the paraphernalia of pontifical parade, laughed to scorn the ancient simplicity. Asceticism and outward observance usurped the place of morals, and the imagination was gratified by gorgeous ceremonies, miraculous legends, and an absolutely heathen worship of reliques and saints. Women and children used the gospel, not to read, but to hang round their necks as a charm; and the clergy themselves patronised these follies, vying with each other in playing off tricks of astrology and sorcery.[2] No doubt they had a difficult part to play. They had to deal with men who seemed incapable of being religious without being superstitious; a rabble converted without any serious convictions, and who, immemorially dissolute and demoralised, looked on Christianity itself with heathen eyes. It has generally been thought advisable by reformers to offer as little violence as possible to prejudice and habit; to insinuate wholesome innovations quietly and discreetly under the disguise of ancient formalities. Yet it may be reasonably doubted whether any real improvement can be secured by such a stratagem; and whether the mental change imagined to have been effected unconsciously, has to any useful purpose been effected at all. The Christian teacher was, often from inability himself to appreciate the character of his calling, utterly disqualified from exercising it in a way which should be profitable to others; and often carried the principle of accommodation to excess, conniving, like Gregory the Great in converting the Anglo-

[1] See Gieseler, i. 2, 308, n. [2] Gieseler, i. 2, 314.

Saxons, at the continuance of pagan habits, in the vain hope that the old root of superstition would ripen into Christian fruit.[1] Thus idolatry and polytheism became intimately blended with Christianity;[2] and, in the course of the fourth century, the Virgin Mary took the highest rank among saints, after a protracted controversy as to her proper title, whether it ought to be "Mother of God," or only "Mother of Christ." Image worship came later, although the churches had long been filled with images and pictures, not, indeed, confessedly intended for worship, but only to feed the eyes and direct the thoughts of the gross and uneducated. So great was the attachment of the Romans to this old idolatry under a new name, that the edict of Leo the Isaurian against image worship provoked an insurrection, which the temporising bishop of the day found it difficult to appease. To every church interdict was annexed a specific condition of absolution for its infringement, and the vulgar saw in this convenient arrangement the opportunity of gratifying every passion with impunity. Immunity from crime was already bartered for money payments. Every one was expected to bequeath to the church some portion of his property; if he died without acquitting himself of the obligation, the church punished him for this presumed fraud upon her rights, by taking the "administration" of his effects entirely into her own hands. She appropriated what she had undertaken to dispose of for "pious uses," or for the use of the poor, to her own use, as being by far the most meritorious pauper; she was presumed to have been the more immediate object of the intention of the deceased, having a better conscience than laymen, as well as more knowledge of what would conduce to the benefit of the deceased's soul.[3] The terrors of hell and excommunication were the chief influences which she brought to bear upon the mind, and provided a man approved himself "after God's own

[1] Gregory directs the heathen fanes to be spared in order that the people, readily crowding to their old familiar haunts, should become insensibly accustomed to the true God; and since it had been customary to slaughter oxen at sacrifices, he advises that tabernacles of boughs of trees should be erected near the fanes so spared, and that there religious conviviality should be celebrated in the usual way in honour of the blessed Martyrs whose relics were kept there. Gieseler, i. 2, 457.

[2] "Adhuc pristinâ paganorum superstitione detenti cultum venerationis plus dæmoniis quam Deo persolvunt." "Cibos mortuis offerunt, et post corpus Domini sacratas dæmoni escas accipiunt." Gieseler, i. 2, 454.

[3] Blackstone's Comment. ii. 494; Hallam's Middle Ages, ii. 203, and Murat° i, there cited.

heart" by being a dutiful son of the church, there was scarcely any limits to the atrocities he might commit.[1]

3. *The Monks.*

The increasing worldliness of the church caused a reaction similar in character and motive to the original Christian movement. Christianity professed to be unworldly, and, as before remarked, partook from the first of that ascetical repugnance to terrestrial gratifications which has always characterised Oriental religion. Many instances of this occur in St. Paul's epistles;[2] and the Clementine Homilies denounce the possession of property beyond the most necessary covering as a kind of sin. Matthew's Gospel speaks in similar terms;[3] but Mark modifies the stringency of the rule so far as to allow a staff, sandals, and even two coats, provided they be not both worn at once. The Gnostic gave a speculative expression to that abhorrence of material things which the Montanist pretender to exclusive spiritualism exhibited in his life; while the church, which was always a conforming rather than a reforming institution, relaxed the inconvenient rigour of antiquity,[4] and placed fasts, penances, and religious observance generally, on an easier and more indulgent footing. The influence of Catholicism depended on its capacity of expansion and self-adaptation to human wants. Its "universalism" consisted in the generality of the test distinguishing its members. Ostensibly this test was unity of doctrine; but since the church discouraged all over-curious inquiry and controversy, the real all-sufficing qualification was obedience. Purity of life could not have been insisted on without becoming a palpable and constant source of disparity and disruption. In the exercise of its plenary apostolic authority, the church smoothed over the scandals of individual delinquency by means of penance and absolution; but its indulgence, however necessary to the generality of men, was revolting to the consciences of those who thought the cause of Christ betrayed by making his yoke too easy. Hence the church was never strictly speaking Catholic; there were always persons claiming to be Christians by virtue of their moral purity, independently of any ordinance of man. The party of the Roman presbyter Nova-

[1] Gieseler, i. 2, 452, 453. [2] Rom. xiv. 2; 1 Cor. vii. 1. [3] Ch. x. 9.
[4] Comp. Recognitiones in Cotelerius, i. 487; 1 Tim. iv. 3.

tianus,[1] who styled themselves "καθαροι," *i. e.* purists or rigorists, were dissentients of this kind; they disapproved the facility of the church in reinstating apostates; holding, in accordance with the well-known decision of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the commission of any gross crime after baptism to be inexpiable. The practice of the church was still more lax than its theory. Worldly success had been succeeded by general corruption. The priests were ignorant, avaricious, intriguing; the people Christians only in name, a prey to profligacy and superstition. Religion was respectable conformity; fasts, almsgiving, and praying had superseded weightier matters; virginity was ridiculously over-estimated; every possible offence had its easy condition of absolution, and the *per contra* of sin and satisfaction was accurately catalogued in casuistical hand-books. The moral sentiment, dissatisfied with the state of the church, naturally sought relief in a different direction. Persecution had stimulated many of the more enthusiastic votaries of asceticism to quit society, like the ancient Essenes and Therapeutæ, in order to indulge their devotional propensities more unremittingly and securely; and when Christianity in ceasing to be persecuted had forfeited its true character, as no longer implying the worldly discomfort of its children, multitudes were induced to imitate the example of the Egyptian anchorites Antony and Paul, until the most dismal solitudes not only of Egypt, but other eastern countries, became populous with self-exiled fanatics seeking union with God by abandoning intercourse with their fellow-creatures. Imitation, the love of idleness, the remorse of the criminal, and the distress of the pauper, swelled the number of those who strove to save themselves by flight from the difficulties and degeneracy of the world. Their rude efforts to subdue the body to the spirit often produced a frightful amount of physical and moral torture: in leaving the world they had not left themselves; the passions outlived the maceration of the body, and the unhappy victims of superstitious folly lay writhing in agony on the ground, while the wild beasts and scorpions surrounding them seemed to their sickly fancy to change into bevies of fair maidens; in vain they declaimed, counted, or repeated the alphabet; many became insane, or committed suicide in their despair. The popularity of monasticism attests the prevalence of a feeling that the aims of Christianity had not been realised;

[1] A.D. 251.

while the rudeness of the expedient resorted to for the purpose of making good the deficiency proves how impossible it was for uneducated minds, however enthusiastic, to comprehend them. The monastic life was an object of enthusiastic encomium to the most famous Fathers of the church, to Athanasius, Ambrose, Basil, Jerome, Chrysostom, and others; they asserted it to be a higher species of virtue, a revival of the primitive Christianity described in the Acts of the Apostles,[1] whose animating principle was certainly antagonism to the demoralisation and injustice of the world. Chrysostom declares that he would gladly see such order and probity among mankind at large as should make monasteries unnecessary; but the reverse of this was the fact, the cities were dens of infamy, the desert alone was prolific in fruits of philosophic meditation. Monasticism was imitation of Elias and the Baptist; it was another name for philosophy; it was an apostolical, an angelic life. See, cried the Fathers, how even common labourers who embrace this happy expedient become immediately objects of consideration, men in the highest stations not disdaining to associate with them. They alone represented[2] that true apostolic fervour which in the church had been suffered to cool down into indifference.

The mistaken idea of quieting the aspirations of the soul by mortifying the body was carried out with relentless consistency, especially by the Syrian pillar saints, whose pertinacity in self-infliction is a memorable instance of the misapplication of a noble sentiment, and the absurdities arising from its misdirection. The church, succumbing as usual to political expediency, was obliged to authorise the anomaly of the monks, whose strict discipline made amends for its own laxity, and whose ignorance and fanaticism supplied a ready instrument to carry any point or to perpetrate any violence. Their self-inflicted austerities imposed upon the vulgar, and their want of official character was amply compensated by their personal consideration. They soon became formidable rivals to the clergy; and the latter feebly endeavoured to mimic peculiarities so palpably conducive to influence and power. Hence, in addition to the tonsure and other monkish characteristics, they became more strict in regard to celibacy, which under these circumstances was enforced by law for the first time.[3]

[1] Gieseler, i. 2, 239. [2] See Jerome in Gieseler, i. 2, 239, n. 24.
[3] By Siricius (A.D. 385) and Leo. I. (446).

But the unnatural regulation was little observed, and the general state of the ordinary ministers of religion, which had originated the rivalry of the monks, continued unimproved. Meantime the monks made successful efforts for ecclesiastical independence. They were sometimes allowed to select some remote bishop as their head, by which they escaped the control of the immediate diocesan; and Synods and Popes had a selfish interest in taking them under their protection. The popes made use of them as monarchs afterwards did of the people, as useful auxiliaries against the aristocracy of the secular dignitaries. But the same corruptions which had threatened the existence of the church became repeatedly fatal to the continued estimation of the monks. In spite of stricter discipline and the regulations by authority of what was at first left to spontaneous piety, the monasteries became notorious for every kind of vicious intemperance; and from the time of Benedict of Nursia the history of Monachism is a continual oscillation between degeneracy and reform, a series of religious revivals, through which alone an institution which, after all, was but a burlesque of Christian sentiment and practice, was enabled to retain its ground.

4. *Revival of Controversy.*

Christianity in the depraved form already described was the chief legacy bequeathed by the ancient Roman world to the nations who established themselves upon its ruins. The other elements of civilisation had disappeared; a fearful barbarism followed after wars and migrations, and there remained only the *ultima ratio* of the rude and ignorant, compulsion or superstition. As Greece conquered its conquerors by literature and art, the Teutonic nations meekly accepted the spiritual yoke inherited from the people they had overcome, and gradually became subjected to a code of ecclesiastical discipline vexatiously controlling the most minute particulars of their daily life. The popes did not think it beneath them to issue mandates about gastronomy and cookery implying the absolute imbecility of their subjects; and one may imagine the scorn with which they must have issued to Boniface, the missionary reformer of Germany, specific directions as to the use of horse flesh and bacon.[1]

[1] Gieseler, ii. 1, 25.

Of course the anarchy which ensued from the intermingling of an untutored race with the dregs of an effete civilisation could not at once be replaced by intelligence and order, and conversion had little immediate effect in improving manners. Religion was little more than superstitious dread of an invisible feudal superior; and the Deity, like the mythical Jove deceived by Numa or Prometheus, was looked upon as a jealous tyrant whose vigilance might be circumvented by human ingenuity through the judicious application of a prayer, a mass, or a relic. Many heathen practices were continued, and many a heathen deity became a Christian saint. The recovery of the writings falsely attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite, gave occasion to the Franks to transfer their allegiance from St. Martin to another Dionysius or "Denis," whom they confounded both with the anonymous writer and with the confederate of St. Paul; and about the same time the Spaniards were fortunate enough to discover at Compostella the bones of their patron St. James, who gratefully prospered their armies in war against the Moors. The bishops became powerful feudatories through the favour of monarchs who hoped, through their intervention, to conciliate the people, and to control the hereditary aristocracy. They took part in the violences of the times, and inculcated the divine obligation of the tithe tax far more sedulously than the lessons of the Gospel. They found it easier to extract wealth from popular credulity than to communicate a knowledge they did not possess, or to repress wrongs which their example encouraged.

A temporary check was given to the growing degeneracy of Christendom when Charlemagne, forming a new empire of the West, undertook to promote the revival of elementary learning by establishing schools. The great Emperor wisely observed[1] that, "although it is better to do than to know, yet knowing necessarily precedes doing." These schools were of course ecclesiastical, being attended and conducted almost exclusively by churchmen. In the scarcity of books and teachers little could be done for the general instruction of the people, who were thought sufficiently informed if they could repeat the creed and Lord's prayer.[2] The most pressing and immediate object was to raise the qualification of the clergy, who were now required

[1] Gieseler, ii. 1, 80.

[2] Even these slight accomplishments could not be enforced without great severity: "si quis ea non teneat, aut vapulet, aut jejunet de omni potu exceptâ aquâ, usque dum hæc pleniter valeat." Gieseler, ii. 1, 91.

to preach to their congregations, and for whose use, to avoid scandal, the monarch caused to be prepared a "Homiliarium," or book of sermons. Masters in grammar and arithmetic, among them Alcuin, were obtained from Italy, the grand object of study being, of course, theology. The worship of images was rejected, money payments for indulgencies prohibited, and generally the Carlovingian period was as an oasis of improvement in the moral desolation of the middle ages. The bishop of Metz attempted a reform of the clergy by introducing among them a monastic rule; and the success of the educational efforts of the Emperor is attested by the names of many distinguished scholars, among which is the eminent one of Erigena. The revival of rational thought and learning was immediately followed by a renewal of conscientious protestation and theological controversy. Claudius, the bishop of Turin,[1] renewed remonstrances long before ineffectually made by Jovinian, Aerius, and Vigilantius. He openly declared in the face of the prevalent superstition and its abettors, who, as he himself tells us, "would, but for the Lord's help, have eaten him alive," that religion does not consist in the worship of dead men; that if they who professed to have given up heathenism worshipped images, they were doing the old thing under a different name; and that if because Christ was crucified, it was necessary to worship every piece of wood in the form of a cross, every virgin must be worshipped because his mother was a virgin, every stable, because he was placed in a stable, every bundle of rags, because he was wrapped in swaddling clothes, &c., &c. Agobard, bishop of Lyons, followed the example in denouncing the base obsequiousness of the priests to popular ignorance. "God," he said, "had not commanded saint worship; it was a mere device of men; if worshipped at all, the saints should have been worshipped during their lives, not after they were dead." The Gothic tribes which overran the Roman Empire had been originally converts to Arianism, and disputes akin to those of Arianism and Nestorianism now recurred as to the respective claims of Christ's humanity and divinity. Elipandus, bishop of Toledo, attempted to reconcile the two discordant views by making the sonship of Christ natural in regard to his divinity, but "adoptive" only as to his humanity; according to his own assertion in John[2] that "his Father was greater than he was;" and Alcuin strove in vain to bring the argumentative Archbishop

[1] A.D. 820.

[2] Ch. xiv. 28.

to an acknowledgment of his error.[1] Another dispute originated in the attempt of a monk, named Gottschalk, to revive the extreme Augustinism which taught a double predestination, a predestination to perdition as well as to election. "The same unchangeable God," he said, "who before the world gratuitously predestinated the elect to eternal life, had also irrevocably predetermined that those sinners whom he knew would turn out wicked should be precipitated into eternal torment." This doctrine, which appeared to make God the source of sin and suffering, was vehemently attacked by the Archbishops of Mayence and Rheims;[2] and, though its author was defended as zealously by another Archbishop,[3] he was condemned for heresy, and died in prison.

5. *Disputes about Transubstantiation.*

The machinery through which the church professed to dispense the treasures of salvation within its keeping were the sacraments. It was necessary to address the rude imagination by something external; doctrinal discussion was as much as possible avoided, and the use of the Scriptures, which, whatever may be claimed on their behalf, in reality imply a challenge to the understanding, was confined to few, and generally discouraged. The religious sentiment of uneducated minds is captivated with mystery, and a sacrament is essentially a religious mystery. The term had been borrowed from the heathen mystic ceremonies; and, although it might have been applied to Christianity in general, it became specifically attached to certain rites considered to possess a more emphatic importance and sanctity. The number of these varied from two to twelve, until Peter Lombard fixed it at seven, each representing some eventful epoch of individual and social life.[4] The church received the new-born infant, inaugurating the accession of a new mem-

[1] Elipandus commences a letter to Alcuin with the following polite salutation:—"To the Reverend Brother Alcuin the Deacon, not a minister of Christ, but a disciple of the beastly Antiphrasius, a new Arius, opposing the doctrine of the venerable Fathers Ambrose, Augustin, and Isidore—if he shall turn from the error of his way, eternal salvation from the Lord; if not, eternal damnation!"

[2] Rabanus Maurus and Hincmar.

[3] Remigius, Archbishop of Lyons, A. D. 852.

[4] Many other fanciful explanations were given of the number of the sacraments. Hales, for instance, says, that although it might have been thought there should only have been two, inasmuch as the evils they were made to remedy were two, *i. e.*

ber by the ceremony of baptism; at maturer age it bestowed confirmation; the spiritual food communicated in the Eucharist was analogous to bodily nourishment; society was supported and maintained in due sanctity and order by means of marriage and the priesthood; sin, the soul's disease, was healed by penance; and its last taint was washed away by extreme unction. Some of these ceremonies were more important than others; baptism, confirmation, and holy orders were considered to have an indelible character, and the Eucharist[1] was holiest of all. All, however, were supposed to possess a necessary and intrinsic virtue; to be, as it was called, "ex opere operato;" as dispensing a benefit actually and immediately available for the recipient, provided he were not at the time engaged in the commission of mortal sin. In opposition to the Donatists and other anti-hierarchical schismatics, who pleaded for individual holiness, it was insisted that the efficacy of the sacrament was by no means impaired by the unworthiness of the administrator; the office was all in all, and any deficiency in the individual was covered by the authority of the church.

The sacraments were well suited to become subjects of mystification; and of all such controversies arising out of the ambiguity of Christian sentiment and symbolism, it may be observed that the real and only difference was between the abettors of popular ignorance and the recoil of revolted intelligence; each side finding corroborative evidence of its peculiar leaning towards the metaphorical or the marvellous in the vague language of Scripture. By the memorable words spoken at the institution of the Lord's Supper, a specific relation was presumed to have been established between the sacramental bread and wine and the body and blood of Jesus; but then it was either a mere commemorative or figurative one, or if the word "change" was used, it was not meant as a substantial change in the Eucharistic elements, but only as illustrating,[2] in analogy with the mystery of the incarnation, their

sin and punishment, yet the church had done right in specifying seven, for there were seven kinds of spiritual sickness, original sin, deadly actual sin, excusable actual sin, cases of difficult choice between good and good or good and bad, difficulty in progress, difficulty in resisting the flesh, and difficulty in resisting other temptations.

[1] Eucharist, *i. e.* the "free gifts" of the congregation. Gieseler, i. 1, 234.

[2] The Catholics quote Pseudo-Ignatius in defence of transubstantiation. See J. Ritter's Handbuch, K. G. i. p. 115. But Ignatius makes faith and love also the body and blood of Christ: the language is evidently figurative. See Trall. viii.; Rom. vii.

supposed incorporation with the Logos, who became flesh in one instance as he became bread in the other.[1] The essence of the mystery was its indefiniteness; and the bread which nourishes the body by combining with it, might be imagined in the peculiar circumstances to bring it into some sort of association with the body of Christ, the process of consecration effecting in reference to the one what that of assimilation is known to do in the other.[2] When the visible and invisible constituents of the Eucharist had been thus brought into comparison with the human and divine elements in Christ's nature, the varieties of opinion which severed the schools of Alexandria and Antioch in regard to the latter, were repeated in a corresponding difference of view in regard to the former. It was the alternative of a transmutation of the visible and ideal and their association; the alteration of the substance of the bread, or a mere change in its qualities. A philosophic thinker, like Origen, could readily see that if, according to Matthew xv. 11, that which enters a man's mouth does not necessarily defile him, neither can the sacramental bread mechanically sanctify him; everything must depend on the heart and feeling; and Theodoret expressly declared that the mystic symbols of Christ's body need not, any more than the body itself, be thought to undergo any change, except the ideal modification imparted to them by the eye of faith. On the other hand, Gregory of Nyssa was inclined to follow those who, like Irenæus,[3] had spoken of the bread and wine as Christ's body and blood, without caring to discriminate between the literal and figurative; and many who, like Chrysostom, were far from intending to imply a miraculous change, were led, in the ardour of rhetorical display, to use language which might easily seem to do so, such as "satiating ourselves with God," "touching, biting, and eating Christ's flesh," "mingling by eating and drinking the leaven of immortality within our entrails." John of Damascus, who systematised the doctrines of the Greek church, declared the bread and wine after consecration to be no longer what they were before, although to avoid alarming the communicant they continued to appear unchanged. It has been freely admitted by Catholic theologians,[4] that transubstantiation

[1] "Alii dicunt panem non solum sacramentum, sed in pane Christum quasi impanatum, sicut Deum in carne personaliter incarnatum."
[2] Justin's 1st Apol. 66; Irenæ. v. 2, 3. [3] Ch. v. 2, 3.
[4] See Gieseler, i. 2, 297.

was not the recognised doctrine of the Latin church up to the time of Ambrose and Augustin; and yet it is easy to see that language like the above might easily be mistaken by the uneducated, whose avidity for the marvellous was as great as their inexperience in the use of figurative terms. Augustin explained the metaphorical language of the Eucharist to mean nothing more than is implied when every year we speak of celebrating the nativity or crucifixion: "Christ was born and died once only; and yet, in the way of similitude, and in a sacramental sense, he may be said to be sacrificed, not only every Easter, but every day. He scrupled not to declare, 'This is my body;' although, in fact, he referred only to a symbol of his body."[1] Notwithstanding, however, this and other similar explanations, the more direct and obvious sense of the sacramental language was by far the more popular; and magical virtue now began to be ascribed to the ceremony, which, indeed, had always been considered a "tremendous mystery." It was often resorted to as a charm to influence the weather; and a certain Acatius, who was born blind, is said to have told Augustin how his pious mother, despairing of medical aid, cured him by making the host into a plaister.[2] The Eucharist had of old been considered as a sort of thank-offering; the "pure offering," for instance, alluded to in Malachi i. 11;[3] and when from a mere festive or commemorative celebration it came to be more or less identified with Christ's body and blood, the thank-offering naturally became one of atonement;[4] an idea which was much enlarged in consequence of the acceptance of the conjectural views about purgatory put forth by Augustin. The clergy made use of Levitical precedent in order to supply the Christian convert with a substitute for heathen sacrifice. Gregory the Great especially encouraged these views, and advocated the use of the Mass, to which he gave its established sacrificial form. Arguing from Matthew xii. 31, that certain offences *might* be remitted both here and hereafter, he thought that the "oblation" of the host must inevitably be of great

[1] See also Fulgentius in Gieseler, i. 2, 435.. [2] Gieseler, i. 2, 298.

[3] See Irenæ. Hær. iv. 17, 5.

[4] The Eucharist was often celebrated at night, and as the Jews believed that Christ would come as a thief in the night, like the "destroyer" of the first-born of Egypt (see Jerome to Matt. xxv. 6), it was usual among Christians not to dismiss the people on the eve of the Passover until after midnight in expectation of Christ's coming; after that hour, supposing themselves safe (!), they kept the ensuing day as a festival.

use for the purpose, adducing instances in which the souls of the departed were known to have themselves audibly begged to have the ceremony performed.[1] Each repetition of it was imagined to be an exact counterpart of the great sacrificial act it was at first thought only to commemorate; and its efficacy became ever greater and more extensive, including not only the immediate communicants, but all persons, living or dead, whom the priest chose to include in his supplication.

While the sacramental doctrine was thus ill-defined, and ever becoming more and more an object of superstition, Paschasius Radbertus, a French monk, took up the gross popular view, and broached it as a deliberate theory. He asserted that by God's almighty power the bread and wine became by consecration Christ's body and blood; that very body and blood which was born of the Virgin Mary and was crucified. The transmutation was substantial and real; but no apparent change took place, because it was necessary to exercise the faith of the communicants as well as to avoid terrifying them. He said there was no more difficulty in believing a creation by consecration than that effected by the immaculate conception; and in corroboration of the argument, appealed not only to Scripture passages asserting the absolute necessity of eating Christ's flesh,[2] but to many instances in which, for the reward and encouragement of the faithful, the elements had exhibited unequivocal traces of blood, and taken the form of a lamb or little boy.[3] The open expression of these opinions was immediately discountenanced by learned theologians; Rabanus Maurus observing, that to take the words of John vi. 53, in their literal sense would be to make the Lord order a scandal and a crime; for he had himself declared the inevitable process awaiting everything taken by man in the way of material food.[4] Remonstrances, however, were vain; the people, self-deceived, preferring, as they always do, to retain the miracle rather than listen to reason. They could not, or would not, understand how Christ might be virtually present, yet not

[1] Gieseler, i. 2, 435. [2] John vi. 53.

[3] Gieseler, ii. 1, 119. When Gregory the Great was in the act of offering the sacrament to a certain woman, he observed her laugh, and on inquiring the cause, was told that she could not believe that bread just brought from the oven by herself could undergo the supposed transmutation. Gregory immediately called on the whole congregation to implore God to confound, by some evident sign, the incredulity of the woman. They did so, and on removing the cloth which had covered the elements in the meantime, found the bloody fragments of a little finger. Schroeckh, xxiii. 339.

[4] Matt. xv. 17.

really so; and when, two hundred years later, Berengar endeavoured to establish against Lanfranc more rational notions of the sacrament, he was almost universally cried down, and compelled to retract. He explained the mystic words, "This is my body," in the same way as the comparisons of Christ to a lion, a lamb, and a corner-stone. He admitted a sacramental change; but the change was the addition of the invisible element, not the destruction of the visible; the communicant who partook of the bread was *spiritually* nourished by the body and blood of Christ. On Berengar's appealing to Rome, the Pope refused to listen to him; and Cardinal Humbert forcibly compelled him to sign an admission that Christ was literally chewed by the teeth of the faithful. Even Hildebrand pleaded vainly in his favour; yet many persons continued to hold the same opinion, although they condemned Berengar for having spoken too plainly,[1] and for having neglected the wholesome Scripture practice of treating the "res significantes" (the symbols) as if they were the thing signified ("res significatas"). Bernhard and the mystics clung to the spiritual sense of the sacrament; others admitted a conditional transubstantiation, dependent on the virtue of the officiating priest, or the merit of the communicant. At length Innocent III. caused the veracity of transubstantiation, when performed by a duly-authorised priest, to be affirmed by a general council; but still inquiring minds were not altogether satisfied. The schoolmen were divided on the subject; some considering the substance of the elements to be changed, leaving behind only their accidents of form, taste, colour, &c.; while others held the opinion afterwards maintained by Luther, that both bread and body were substantially present in union. Both suppositions required the aid of miracle; one to explain what had become of the substance of the bread and wine, the other to account for its incomprehensible agglomeration with another substance. There was a difficulty, too, as to the extent and continuance of the transmutation; some thinking it to apply only to the part actually eaten, others to the whole of what was consecrated; and a serious problem arose as to what might become of Christ's body in case the bread happened to be burned, or to be eaten by a mouse. Buonaventura and Peter Lombard shrank from the derogatory supposition, and inferred, that on the approach of the desecrating influence the conversion of the bread was reversed, or that a new sub-

[1] Nuditate sermonis scandalum movebat.

stance took its place, or that the mouse fed only upon its accidents. Hales, on the other hand, maintained the continuance of Christ's body, fire or mouse notwithstanding; yet the question was puzzling, since one alternative jeopardised the dignity of the sacrament, the other its reality. Peter Lombard confessed, with a groan, that what the mouse actually eats God alone knows;[1] and Aquinas thought it after all less dangerous to allow the divine body and blood to be unworthily violated, than to suffer a doubt to attach to the efficacy of consecration, and to make the presence of the Deity depend on the depredations of a mouse.

6. *Papal Supremacy.*

When Constantine legalised the endowments of the church, he may be considered as having indirectly laid the foundation of its temporal power. Although he made no cession, as afterwards pretended, of imperial prerogative, and continued to all intents and purposes the Pontifex Maximus, or head of the State religion, his relinquishment of the ancient seat of government was in reality to transfer a large portion of the *prestige* of Roman precedency to the bishops. But for many centuries after his death, the Roman prelates exercised no rights of secular sovereignty. His successors continued to be the recognised sovereigns of Italy; and the Church, however enriched through the weakness or liberality of its members, was confessedly dependent on the State. The Gothic kings and Exarchs of Ravenna successively exercised the imperial function of ratifying episcopal elections; and their right was often admitted by the bishops themselves, who, down to the eighth century, distinctly acknowledged the Eastern Emperor as their "master." But from the time of the Lombard establishment in Italy the influence of the Greek Emperor became weaker, while the spiritual authority of the Roman bishops was steadily increasing. Many causes contributed to this result. The division of the empire, the necessity of a central ecclesiastical authority to oppose Arianism, and the custom of applying to the successor of Peter on disputed questions, caused the Roman See, whose metropolitan jurisdiction was originally confined to ten provinces of middle and lower Italy, to assume the superintendence of the

[1] "Quid ergo sumit mus, vel quid manducat? Deus novit!"

whole Western church. The spiritual authority once firmly established, soon took a more substantial form. The turbulent factions of Damascus and Ursinus did not shed their blood for an altogether imaginary prize; it was already a fine thing to be the Roman bishop, who fared sumptuously every day, parading in a brilliant equipage elegantly dressed, and rich in the smiles and presents of noble ladies.[1] The abandonment of Italy by the Greek emperors seemed to justify the transference of allegiance to another protector; and it was perhaps fortunate that when legitimate authority relaxed the vigour of its grasp, the deficiency could in some degree be supplied by a native official, who, as in the rencontre of Leo with Attila, sometimes succeeded by merely spiritual means in rescuing the country from devastation. Under these circumstances, the Romans attached themselves to their native prelates, who were occasionally as much distinguished for ability and virtue as for wealth. Leo the Great appears to have been the first who divined the future of the Papacy; it was he who, under the pretence of more effectually securing the attachment of the provinces, persuaded[2] Valentinian III. to issue the already-mentioned edict which was so favourable to himself. He promoted clerical influence by encouraging celibacy, auricular confession, and severity to heretics,[3] declaring in one of his epistles, how "the Lord had selected Peter out of all the Apostles, as organ of universal truth; from him, as from a head, it was to circulate its genial influence through the whole Christian body, so that no one presuming to estrange himself from Peter should be allowed to partake its privileges." The absence of external control encouraged the presumption of the clergy, who already began to declare the successor of Peter amenable to no authority but God's.[4] The energetic character of Gregory the Great was well suited to promote such pretensions. Zealous and disinterested, but bigoted and ambitious, he made the advancement of Christ's kingdom considered as identical with the Papacy the business of his life. Disdaining senatorial rank and civil distinctions, he turned his patrimonial palace into a cloister, and united monkish severity with episcopal magnificence. Patronising to the poor and credulous, he strictly enforced ecclesiastical discipline, and increased the pomp and luxury of worship. The theories of purgatory and of the mass took from him their permanent

[1] Gieseler, i. 2, 193, n.
[2] On occasion of the struggle for supremacy with Hilary, bishop of Arles.
[3] Gieseler, i. 2, 319, 326. [4] Ibid. i. 2, 403.

form; and while undervaluing human learning, he cherished unbounded faith in the grossest superstitions of the day.[1] He called himself the "servant of Christ's servants," and the austerity of his ecclesiastical zeal made him stoop to a Jesuitical compliance for the benefit of the church. He bestowed fulsome commendations on a wicked queen, who in the midst of her crimes had evinced a superstitious partiality for churchmen, making devout bequests for monasteries and relics. He gave thanks to Providence when the Greek Emperor, who patronised the domineering pretensions of the rival patriarch of Constantinople, fell by the hand of a murderer; yet he appears not to have scrupled to pay court to the imperial assassin, in order to obtain the very title, which he had stigmatised as antichristian in the Patriarch, for himself.[2]

At all events the title which had given so much umbrage to Gregory was afterwards unhesitatingly assumed by the Roman Pontiffs; and after Gregory II. had declared it to be as impossible for a priest to confer crowns as for a prince to decide religious controveries, Leo III. formally conferred the Roman Empire upon Charlemagne. The popes, more than ever estranged from the Eastern Empire in consequence of the iconoclastic controversy, had become closely connected with the Frankish kings in a league of reciprocal interest. They wanted a powerful protector against the Lombards; and, on the other hand, the "Mayors of the palace" had to win a semblance of legitimacy for their recent usurpation of the throne. Accordingly, when an embassy had been dispatched to Rome to inquire which, in the opinion of the Holy See was the more legitimate ruler, he who had the name only of king, or he who really wielded the royal power, the Pope naturally gave to this leading question the expected answer; a new king was appointed by apostolical authority; and the popes not only succeeded in securing the attachment, or, as they called it, "conversion" of the Frank prelates to the See of Rome, but obtained from the new monarch the substantial aid which at Constantinople they had asked in vain. They eventually succeeded to the dignity and feudal proprietorship of the Exarchate, which the Franks

[1] In a letter to the Byzantine Empress, who had requested to be furnished with the head of the holy martyr, St. Paul, he deplores his inability to comply; since the bodies of the blessed martyrs "blazed with such terrific prodigies that no one could venture even to pray in the vicinity of their remains;" and he adds, that certain monks, who inadvertently looked on the corpse of St. Lawrence, died within ten days.

[2] Gieseler, i. 2, 414, 448.

declared that they had rescued from Lombard invasion, not for the benefit of the Greek Emperor, but for the honour of St. Peter and the health of their own souls. The principle of papal supremacy was already asserted;[1] and the ensuing struggle with the civil power had no other object than to enforce acknowledgment of this pretension on the part of those who were most interested in contradicting it. It had been customary for kings to elect the bishops, or at least to confirm the popularly-elected candidate; while the bishops, conjointly with the other great feudatories, controlled the election of the kings. A relation of this kind subsisted between the Roman prelates and the Carlovingian emperors; each was alternately supreme in regard to the other, and the dubious reciprocity making each in a different sense sovereign, naturally led to conflicting pretensions and rivalries. The temper of the age favoured the ambition of the popes, who adroitly took advantage of the distractions of the empire.[2] More keensighted than the sovereigns who were superstitiously solicitous about a Roman coronation, the popes already aimed at elective independence. It was at this time that, unwilling to owe their authority to German barbarians, they began to put forward the forged donation of Constantine already alluded to, a mythical document making the first Christian emperor personally responsible for the late results of his policy, and changing the premeditated usurpation of the clergy into a right already conceded. Nicholas I., one of those strange compounds of magnanimity and bigotry often met with in the annals of the church, was one of the earliest to make use of this forgery. Emboldened by the specious encouragement to his ambition, he ventured to assume the badges of royalty, to depose archbishops, and to excommunicate a king. Nothing could have been more opportune for the purpose of getting rid of an unwelcome restraint than the discovery, or rather invention, of such a document; and about the same time appeared the false decretals bearing the name of Isidore, a collection of pontifical decrees ostensibly emanating from the remote times of Roman Christianity, and shrewdly adapted to advance and centralise the authority of the popes. By their exclusive knowledge of Latin the clergy had an unlimited power of altering the language of public documents to suit

[1] Giesceler, ii. 1, 43.

[2] John XXII. is reported to have declared publicly, "Quando inter reges mundi et principes est discordia, tunc Papa est verus Papa, et timetur."

their own purposes;[1] yet it can hardly be supposed that so unscrupulous a fraud would have passed altogether unsuspected, had it not faithfully expressed the general bias of the age. The church prospered because, to the degraded intellects which submitted to its claims, its control was felt to be useful. It was an elementary effort of mind to stem the overflowings of ferocity; and though the dark age which was its only appropriate sphere ended long before its career of usurpation, it is unquestionable that superstition effected what reason would have attempted in vain, and that its influence was for a time salutary. It would be impossible otherwise to account for the continued vitality of an institution so discreditably abused as the Papacy of the tenth century, which was openly sold to the highest bidder, and remained for sixty years at the disposal of profligate women. The popes were discredited, but not their office; the latter continued to be appealed to by those who had a point to carry in opposition to law or public opinion; and the prelate who owed his appointment to the foulest intrigues was still thought capable of conferring the most efficacious blessing and the fullest absolution.[2] The improvements of Charlemagne had little permanent influence over Christianity at large; the clergy were, as before, corrupt and arbitrary, the people ferocious and superstitious. A conversion commencing among the wayward fancies of a barbarous court, and thence spreading mechanically through the mass of a half-heathen population, had little wholesome influence. "Men, like fish, were devourers of each other; there was no fear of God or man; iniquity trod on the heels of iniquity; adultery, sacrilege, and homicide abounded. The strong oppressed the weak, every one did as he pleased."[3] Saints and relics increased immoderately; the most preposterous legends found ready credence, and miracles swarmed everywhere. Yet only the vigilance of sectarianism could detect the impostures which were unblushingly perpetrated in the interest of the church; the heretic saw through the devices of the Catholic, as the Catholic exposed the tricks of the heretic;[4] but both parties were alike blind to the fallacies which they felt interested in believing.[5]

[1] Hallam, Mid. Ages, ii. 223.
[2] Gieseler, ii. 1, 258, n. 10.
[3] Ibid. ii. 1, 265.
[4] Ibid. p. 452, n.
[5] Gregory of Tours imitates the example of the Hebrew historian of the "Kings" in dwelling on the invariable association of prosperity with orthodoxy, and overlooks the most shameful excesses in those monarchs who persecuted heretics and dutifully confessed the Trinity. Gieseler, i. 2, p. 453.

The clergy of course increased in wealth and power; benefices were richly endowed, and bishops and abbots, under the patronage of the emperors, obtained in many instances the emoluments and dignity of princes.[1] At the same time the saying was verified, "like people like priest."[2] The priests, in Italy especially, were habitual drunkards; instead of studying the Scripture, they pored over obscene pictures; Damiani, bishop of Ostia, wrote a book entitled "Gomorrhianus," giving a frightful picture of clerical profligacy; and the reforming bishop Ratherius of Verona could not prevail upon his clergy even to learn the creeds, or to read the Epistle and Gospel.[3] And yet in this, the darkest age of Christian history, which Baronius says ought to be called "iron" from its fierceness, and "leaden" for its gross wickedness, the church produced great virtues as well as vices; it exercised a wholesome control over the worst excesses of barbarism, promoted gentleness and hospitality, and mitigated or regulated what it would have been incompetent to abolish. A bond of union was kept up among nations animated with a love of individual independence predisposing every class and corporation to pursue a several interest. The people, if not intellectually improved, were at least made amenable to something like moral restraint. After several ineffectual attempts to put an entire stop to feudal violence by means of religious pledges, the famous "Truce of God" was successfully established in France;[4] ordeals, invocations of the dead, and other remnants of heathenism fell under Christian management. The learning which had retired before the barbarian invaders of Rome to the Arabians, or to the extremities of Ireland or Scotland, returned under the patronage of the church, and was cultivated in the security of the cloister. The very weakness of the intellect which invited the abuse of power, sometimes proved a barrier to its enormities; and Christianity, which at the first had been an ideal refuge against oppression, offered a substantial asylum for its children. Clerical venality and corruption were sometimes repressed by the better popes of imperial appointment; and it was only through the general imbecility or

[1] Gieseler, ii. 1, 244. [2] Isaiah xxiv. 2; see Gieseler, ii. 1, 266.

[3] When indignantly remonstrating against the ignorance of the neighbouring clergy who thought the Deity corporeal, he is said to have been startled by the discovery that even his own flock were unable to conceive how God could live without a head! Gieseler, ii. 1, 267.

[4] A.D. 1041.

depravity of the occupants of the papal chair that they were prevented from attaining in the tenth century the unlimited sway awaiting them at the close of the eleventh.[1] Their extended dominion was a consequence of the want of a powerful control, and of a reform which, first effected among the leaders of the church, empowered them to speak authoritatively to the world. The Benedictine monks of Clugny in Burgundy were among those who in the tenth century most deeply felt, and were most anxious to reform, papal degradation and church corruption. Here lived in retirement the afterwards celebrated Hildebrand, whom his friend Bruno, on being appointed pope by the Emperor, would have persuaded to accompany him to Rome. The proud monk consented only on condition that the elect of the Emperor, disclaiming the investiture of an earthly sovereign, should go as a barefooted pilgrim to receive the still vacant dignity by a new election from the Roman clergy and people. From that time until his own accession as Gregory VII.,[2] he was the soul of unremitting efforts in the cause of reform and ecclesiastical supremacy. To escape the condition of feudal vassalage implied in lay patronage and investitures, to put an end to the simoniacal sale and arbitrary sequestrations of ecclesiastical revenues, and to counteract another source of church secularisation by enforcing anew the celibacy of the clergy, and so estranging them from social interests and popular sympathies, were the chief objects which he meditated. The still vague idea of papal prerogative was formed by Gregory into a system far transcending all former pretension. The Roman church was declared to have been founded by Christ alone; its pontiff was the "universal bishop," alone entitled to use imperial insignia, to depose emperors as well as bishops, and to absolve subjects from their allegiance. His name was unique in the world; he could be judged of none; the Roman church never had erred, nor, according to divine authority,[3] ever could; and he was no

[1] So great was the popular dread of excommunication that the King of France became an outcast from society until, by repudiating his queen, he succeeded in reconciling himself to the church. The two attendants who alone remained with him destroyed the vessels out of which he eat and drank; and the issue of the prohibited marriage was commonly believed to have been a monster.

[2] A.D. 1049 to 1073.

[3] The notion of the Pope's infallibility was based on the passage in the Gospel, Luke xxii. 32—"I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Hence it was supposed that the faith of Peter *and of his successors* could never fail. See Giesceler, ii. 2, 228.

true Catholic who did not implicitly agree with it.[1] "How," asked Hildebrand, "can he who denies the power of the church to bind, reasonably expect to benefit by its privilege of absolution?"

The secular and spiritual powers are never wholly separated. Influence over the soul implies influence over the body, and sooner or later is sure to make itself felt. Hildebrand was the model of an ecclesiastical reformer. He fancied himself an apostle, while acting as an unscrupulous politician. The inscription on his tomb at Salerno calls him the inflexible assertor of the liberties of the church; but the liberty of the church means the mental prostration of mankind. He discovered that the islands Sardinia and Corsica were part of the patrimony conferred of old upon St. Peter by Constantine; that Spain, long usurped by pagans, belonged of right to the Apostolic See; and so of Hungary, Saxony, Denmark, and Russia. He conceived, too, that he had claims on Provence, and enforced throughout France what was already in vogue elsewhere, the payment by every household of a yearly penny to St. Peter. The gift of the pallium, originally a spontaneous compliment or mark of favour, was made into a compulsory symbol of vassalage by the popes, who, at the same time, exacting an oath of fealty from all bishops and abbots, became the heads of a regular feudal aristocracy.[2] Although not immediately successful (for William the Conqueror and other potentates were not to be trifled with), the plans of Hildebrand had all the advantage which dexterous management and indomitable perseverance are sure to gain over ignorance and weakness. He feelingly complained of the all-pervading worldliness of kings, priests, and people; that all sought their own interest instead of that of Jesus Christ; that reverence was trodden under foot; that the people were abandoned to the depravity of their ways, and taught evil instead of good by the example of their superiors.[3] And yet his own conduct in executing his favourite project of making the State subordinate to a grand theocracy of the church, was the very quintessence of worldly ambition, remorselessly prosecuted without scruple

[1] Gieseler, ii. 2, 7.

[2] Innocent II. shortly after declared, "Ye know that Rome is head of the world, and that ecclesiastical dignities are held by feudal right of the Roman pontiff, and cannot be lawfully conferred without his licence." Gieseler, ii. 2, 222.

[3] Gieseler, ii. 2, 9.

as to means, and exhibiting the iron will and cunning art of a master of intrigue, instead of Christian forbearance and benevolence. An abbot who, for insubordination, had cruelly put out the eyes and torn out the tongue of certain monks, was eagerly applauded by Hildebrand, who immediately promoted him to a bishopric. Three imperial princesses cherished a devout admiration for the character of this domineering prelate, whom they regarded as their spiritual father; and the Countess Matilda especially, one of the largest proprietors of Italy, very naturally made him, who had become the master of her mind, the heir of her estate. In the eager war which he carried on against the sale of benefices and clerical marriage or concubinage, he displayed the bigotry of a monk but little of the humanity of a statesman. In defiance of the Catholic principle of respecting the office without regard to the merit or demerit of the officiator, he interdicted the hearing of mass when performed by married or simoniacally-appointed priests, declaring all such to be *ipso facto* deposed, and all who listened to them (according to 1 Sam. xv. 23) to be accursed as disobedient idolators. The celibacy of the clergy, now for the first time peremptorily insisted on, was serviceable to the church, not merely by promoting an exclusive professional zeal, and securing a peculiar caste or class devoted wholly to its interests, but because an ostentatious austerity was best calculated to obtain a hold upon the prejudices of mankind, and because church influence was strengthened by exhibiting in every parish priest an imposing example of monkish self-denial. Papal emissaries excited the fanaticism of the populace against the married clergy, who vainly protested against the inhuman edict requiring repudiation of wife and family; the unfortunate recusants were hooted as they walked; many of them were exiled, mutilated, and even tortured or killed. The churches were deserted, the sacraments unperformed, the consecrated elements trodden under foot, and the laity thought they had fulfilled every duty by executing with exaggerated cruelty the papal sentence against their pastors.[1] The church, doubtless, wanted reform, but Hildebrand's reform was revolutionary. He wanted to break through the legal restraint of feudalism, and to annihilate the rival pretender to paramount rights. The possessor of the keys of heaven could not, he thought, consistently submit to

[1] Giesceler, p. 17.

be the vassal or deputy of man. But he was guilty of a double usurpation, when, in order to obviate the scandals arising from the sale of benefices, he cancelled the right of conferring them by the hands of laymen. The laity in general were robbed of an immemorial privilege, and, moreover, the episcopacy had become inextricably bound up with its secular endowments, which the emperors, in addition to their prescriptive right of confirmation, were certainly entitled to confer upon the already consecrated bishop by feudal investiture. Hildebrand chose to consider the temporalities a subordinate accessory of the spiritual office; and the accredited words of St. Peter himself[1] were ineffectually quoted on behalf of the monarch, who argued, not unreasonably, that the episcopal function implied no dispensation from the usual obligations of a subject. The contest of Hildebrand with the Emperor Henry IV., whom he knew to be weak through the disaffection of his people, stands in no very creditable contrast with his temporising and obsequious demeanour to more powerful sovereigns.[2] It became at last what it appeared to Theodoric, bishop of Verdun, a personal quarrel instead of one of principle; instigated not by zeal for religion, but hatred of a rival. The bishops consecrated by Henry were the only ones prohibited from executing their functions; his partisans were not to be prayed for; the killing them was no homicide; they sinned against the Holy Ghost, and were accursed both in this world and the next.[3]

Gregory was the real author of the celebrated decree of Nicholas II., devised for the purpose of excluding both popular and imperial influence over papal elections, by submitting them to the determination of the conclave of cardinals; and also of that of Alexander II.—afterwards the source of much contention—requiring every bishop elect, before entering upon his functions, to receive confirmation from Rome. The popes had at first subverted the authority of the metropolitans under pretence of protecting the bishops; they now assumed the right of citing all bishops indiscriminately to appear at Rome to receive their

[1] 1 Peter ii. 17; also Titus iii. 1.

[2] He says, in one of his letters to a legate, "The King of England (William I.) has certainly not conducted himself in some respects as dutifully as could be wished; nevertheless, inasmuch as he appears more honourable and respectable than other kings, his authority must be dealt with more indulgently." Gieseler, ii. 2, 38.

[3] Gieseler, ii. 2, 29.

orders. Archbishop Lanfranc contented himself with pleading inability to obtain the Conqueror's permission to undertake the journey; but the papal requirement was the subject of a prolonged contest between Anselm and succeeding monarchs.

A powerful auxiliary had been acquired by the popes in the Norman dukes of Southern Italy, who, subdued by the *prestige* of the papal name, were content to purchase the show of legitimacy by a profession of dutiful allegiance to the pontiff they had vanquished and captured. But a greater extension of influence was gained for the church when the unquiet spirits of Europe, including the majority of its male population, were enlisted in a war against the infidels under what was virtually the papal banner. Famine and sedition, poverty and pestilence, swelled the number of those who were predisposed for emigration. Many left their homes with all their property and furniture at the instigation of fortune-tellers, who announced a special summons to the land of promise; many went from levity, or to evade their creditors; others, hoping to expiate the weight of deadly sin, and prepared to accept any inconvenience or calamity as a divinely-inflicted penance. The popularity of the crusade implied the ascendancy of its apostolical promoter (Urban II.), who could well afford to confer unlimited remission of sins and the chances of martyrdom on all who in this way rendered to the church their otherwise gratuitous services. With much address the popes yielded when it was imprudent to insist, and for their own interest connived at the simoniacal traffic which in others they condemned.[1] To compass their aim they scrupled not to kindle sedition, and to stir up unnatural quarrels between sons and fathers. Arnold of Brescia fell a victim to the temerity of his republican enthusiasm in venturing to contrast the example of Christ and his Apostles with the inordinate wealth and pretensions of the Roman clergy; and in setting up the senate against the hierarchy; while, in the interests of ecclesiastical supremacy, the talent of Adrian IV. raised him from an English beggar to the possession of a throne to which the Emperor (Frederic Barbarossa) was compelled to do homage. The zealous churchman, Bernhard of Clairvaulx, who had eloquently denounced Arnold as the diabolical devourer of human souls, in vain urged the impossibility

[1] Gieseler, ii. 2, 250, 251, 252.

of blending religion and dominion, and the danger of ruining both in the attempt.[1] Occasionally reproof took the form of prophecy, and the holy St. Hildegard and Joachim of Calabria saw, in the increasing corruption of the church, a sign of the end of the world, at which the Emperor would act the part of Antichrist, and the monks turn out to be the elect. The emperors often combated papal encroachments with success, and when the English barons gave Archbishop Anselm to understand that, rather than submit to papal dictation, they would quit the Roman communion, Pascal II. found it politic to temporise, at least "until the gentle rains of doctrine should have softened the king's heart."[2] Yet the popes never really retreated; although individuals might be disposed to yield (Pascal II.), the system was inflexible, and when other resources failed, they could always create a diversion by raising the war cry against the Saracens, who were of the same use to them in preoccupying the public enthusiasm as were the Sabines and Samnites to the Patricians of old Rome. Favouring circumstances at length put it in the power of a great political genius to take full advantage of the overwhelming sentiment which had reduced the German emperor to become a suppliant at Canossa, and forced Henry II. to do penance at the tomb of Becket. As earnest as Hildebrand, and still more able, Innocent III. overruled all the sovereigns of Europe through their interests, their quarrels, or their crimes. As vicar, not of Peter only, but of God and of Christ, he realised the papal idea of a theocratic empire, exercising general jurisdiction in causes both civil and ecclesiastical, absolving from sin, and dispensing with law.[3] He was an ecclesiastical Cincinnatus, thoroughly despising the power and wealth which, for the interests of the church, he employed in the most despotic manner. The sacerdotal power, he said, was the great light of the political firma-

[1] Addressing Eugenius III. he said, "You walk about in gold, but how fare the sheep? I scruple not to say that these are pastures of devils rather than lambs. Did Peter or Paul the like? Did they go about in purple and fine linen? Shall all the zeal of the church be squandered on its own pride? Shall vainglory occupy all the thoughts, and holiness none? I fear no poison, no sword on your behalf so much as the lust of rule."

[2] Gieseler, ii. 2, 49.

[3] Ibid. ii. 2, 27. "Secundum plenitudinem potestatis de jure possumus supra jus dispensare." And although the Pope could not grant dispensations against the apostolical canons, or enable a monk to hold property, he might, it seems, dispense in some cases even with *natural law*, although Aquinas denies this.

ment, from which the lesser, the kingly, derived its lustre; one swayed the bodies of men, the other their souls; and proportionate to the superior dignity of the soul was the superiority of the priesthood.[1] Through the success of the crusade cunningly directed by Dandolo against Constantinople, he began to entertain a by no means disinterested hope of restoring that union of Christendom which had at length been definitively broken off with mutual execrations and anathemas—not in consequence of any important doctrinal differences, but of the overbearing claims of the Roman See. He disposed of England as a dependency, and while playing the demagogue in Italy by allying himself with the republican cities of Lombardy in order to humble the Emperor, treated the signing of Magna Charta as rebellion against the Holy See.[2] By one expedient or another, Rome contrived to monopolise the disposal of church patronage. By its recommendatory letters it obtained the next presentations to benefices; and the demand, at first preferred in the tone of modest request, was ere long insisted on as an unquestionable right. To such an excess was this carried, that the Italian priests in England received annually more than sixty thousand marks,—more, in fact, than the whole royal revenue. A swarm of legates ranged over Christendom with unlimited power, like proconsuls in conquered provinces, subverting the ordinary authority of the bishops, and making themselves detested by their pride, exactions, and vices.[3] The internal decay of the church thus went hand in hand with the

[1] Gieseler, ii. 2, 109. Two favourite maxims were incessantly referred to by the popes: one taken from the Book of Samuel, that "disobedience is as bad as witchcraft" or idolatry; the other, that the ministers of their pleasure were associated in the cares but not in the powers of government; "vocati in partem sollicitudinis, non in plenitudinem potestatis."

[2] He called it the "shame of England, perilling the efficacy of the crucifixion, which would necessarily be impaired by the king's wrongful signing of the cross, if everything so extorted from him were not absolutely revoked by superior authority." Accordingly, a bull, issued August 15, 1215, was proclaimed with lighted candles and ringing of bells throughout the country to the following effect:—"In the name of Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and by authority of his Apostles, Peter and Paul, and also our own, we utterly reprobate and consign to damnation this wicked compact, forbidding, under pain of anathema, the said King from observing it, or the barons and their accomplices from exacting its observance, cancelling and making void the said charter with all its securities and provisoes," &c.

[3] Bernhard in Gieseler, ii. 2, 245. "Vir apostolicus omnia replevit non evangelio sed sacrilegio. Turpia fertur ubique commisisse." And John of Salisbury, "Legati sedis apostolicæ—in provinciis ita debacchantur ac si ad flagellandum egressus sit Satan a facie Domini," &c.

growth of its pretensions. Its inordinate claims, so glaringly opposed to the Christian character, its vain formalism, and the excesses and insatiable avarice of its leaders, undermined the popular prepossession which had been the basis of its success, and threatened to change the blind devotion of mankind into implacable aversion.[1]

[1] "Valdè timendum, ne istud odium, quod conceptum est contrà vos in cordibus hominum fere omnium, possit parere aliquid grande monstrum." Gravamina Eccles. Gallicanæ in Gieseler, ii. 2, 259.

PART VII.

THEOLOGY OF THE CHURCH.

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1. *The Scholastic Theology.*

In the course of its triumphant career the church assumed all the attributes and accessories of sovereignty. Its military banner was borne by the Crusaders; the arbitrary decrees of the popes were formed into a body of ecclesiastical law; and an attempt was made to confirm its empire over the mind by means of an elaborate system of theology.

The first six centuries may be regarded as the creative age, during which, after much effort, Christianity succeeded in establishing a creed or doctrinal system challenging implicit belief. The "Fathers" were the legitimate parents of dogma, and their many controversies were as the throes preceding the birth of this memorable progeny. Definite expressions of opinion respecting the Trinity, the nature of Christ, sin, grace, and redemption, received deliberate sanction, and were never afterwards abandoned. But though the faith continued the same, the attitude of the mind changed in regard to it. The acuteness which had been partially exercised in the Arian, Pelagian, and sacramental controversies, was still more systematically developed under the protection and for the interests of the hierarchy, which tended to reduce man's whole intellectual life to a rigid formalism. From the end of the eleventh century there thus began a new period in the annals of traditional Christianity, when the schools which arose out of the foundations of the Carlovingian age became important confederates of the church, and the "Patres" were succeeded by the "Doctores." We hear no longer of the same kind of strife as that which had convulsed antiquity; for the object was not so much to determine or originate a disputed doctrine, as to bring what was

already settled into harmony with awakening intellect. It was an effort to convert religious belief into religious knowledge; not pretending to create, but only to discuss and understand.

The mainstay of early Christianity was belief. "Patience," pertinacity, and "stable-mindedness" in the faith,[1] were the great apostolical virtues. Even those Fathers who attempted to build up a "gnosis" or science out of Christianity, made faith its foundation; confounding, by a very natural blunder, the data of creed with the first intuitive principles of reasoning, and deducing a positive inference from the conditional negative propounded by Isaiah to Ahaz, "Unless thou believest surely thou shalt *not* be established."[2] Tertullian demanded a blind faith anterior and independent of all inquiry;[3] the words "seek and ye shall find" do not, he said, apply to those who already believe in Christ. Christianity stood aloof from argument; and it has been seen how Tertullian went so far as to assert its very absurdities to be the best arguments in its favour.[4] He looked on philosophy, or this "world's wisdom," as devilish; and even the Fathers who did not absolutely reject philosophy, were misled by an ambiguity in the term to make it unconditionally subordinate to religion in the relation it has since been generally content to retain, that of a slave or servant.[5] The objects of religion and philosophy are in reality one. Both aim at discovering the first source of truth and goodness, and deducing rules for the guidance of opinion and action. But though pursuing the same things, they pursue them in different ways. Religion takes its stand on the first obtained conclusions, thenceforth obstinately defending what it holds to be divine revelations; but the supposed revelations inevitably come into collision with new ideas and experiences, to which philosophy alone can afford to give a hearing. The essential incompatibility of a stationary religion with a progressive philosophy was at first overlooked. Neither the ancient Greek sages nor the mediæval schools acknowledged a severance between the two; and considering their real identity of aim, it may seem strange that there should have been any difficulty in uniting what, indeed, ought never to have been separated. But it is the nature of religion to hallow its instruments as well as its ends; to confound the Deity with human definitions

[1] See Hebr. x. 23, 36–38; also the Ep. James, Hermas, and 1 Clemens xi.
[2] Isaiah vii. 9. [3] De Cor. Mil. ii.; Ritter's Phil. i. 367.
[4] "Credibile quia ineptum; certum quia impossibile." [5] "Ancilla theologiæ."

and conceptions of Him in undistinguishing reverence, and to claim, as the older and better way, supernatural authority and an exclusive right. At this point religion and philosophy take opposite paths. Intellectual tyranny cannot tolerate the intrusion of free inquiry, which attempts by laborious effort to attain what religion pretends already to possess; and it is only when after long intellectual discipline men have come to be familiarly acquainted with the laws and operations of their own minds, that they learn to distinguish form from substance, the difference between religion in itself and the modes of its expression, or the traditions usurping its place.

Scholasticism may be regarded as the commencement of the long struggle against tyrannical opinion. In it, however, the strife was undeclared and unconscious; the reason had still to ascertain its relative position, and to resume its right. It did not as yet profess to subvert old dogmas, or to originate new ones; its sole aim was to reconcile and to explain. It summoned the power of the understanding to analyse a belief which was not to be questioned. No one thought of bringing the fundamental assumptions of faith before the tribunal of the intellect in order to convict them of error, or even to establish their authority. No one at first suspected that a thing might be true for reason, yet theologically false; there was but one truth, and the articles of faith were the data or first principles of all theological reasoning. Abelard's rationalism was exceptional; Anselm's "fides precedit intellectum" was the true principle of scholasticism. The end and aim of all rational beings, happiness and God, lie beyond nature; and in order to form a conception of our proper aim (of course the first and most indispensable condition of attaining it), it was assumed that we stand in need of a supernatural revelation. "I do not seek to understand," said Anselm, "in order to believe; but I believe in order that I may understand; for I know that I cannot understand if I do not believe. The Christian is delighted if he can understand his faith; if he cannot, he submissively adores what transcends his powers of comprehension; for the carnal man cannot penetrate the deep things of God."[1] Theology, therefore, as defined by Aquinas,[2] does not undertake to prove the faith, but is an argumentative science founded on it; the business of reason in religion is confined to interpreting its data, and placing them in a clear light. Thus the infallibility of the Pope in matters of faith, which Aquinas for the first time

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 14. [2] Baur's Trinity, ii. 360.

maintained, was supposed to be sufficiently proved by three Scripture texts;[1] and his authority to canonise, or to create objects of worship for the multitude, was declared to be a pious corollary from the above inference requiring no argument.[2] In short, the schoolmen, if philosophers at all, were philosophers with a crotchet, which prevented their rising to the dignity of their calling. They did not address themselves unreservedly to reason, but retarded its growth and intercepted its natural action by drilling it for the service of the church. They yoked traditional ideas to incongruous forms of reasoning; and the attempt to unite the incompatible was here, as in other cases of ill-assorted alliances, only the first step to entire separation. The effort to produce harmony multiplied the evidences of discord, and the inability of the finite to grasp the infinite objects of theological speculation continually revealed itself in a tendency to overleap its bounds by plunging into dogmatism. In attempting to interpret theological oracles reason could only falsify its nature, slavishly registering what it was impossible to comprehend. The auxiliary could only exert its real energies by playing the usurper; and though its interference with sacred things implied a lurking anticipation of freedom, it was impossible to realise this happy consummation without an entire alteration of plan, and the complete abandonment of a system tied to dogmatical authority as its basis.

2. *Anselm.*

The dispute of Lanfranc and Berengar about the Eucharist rapidly developed a taste for the argumentative treatment of theology; and the earliest "scholastic" efforts to harmonise faith and reason were, as in that celebrated controversy, confined to showing that the two were not absolutely at variance, by instancing their compatibility in some of the more prominent dogmas. The famous ontological argument to prove the existence of God brought forward by Anselm, the pupil of Lanfranc, is an example of this kind. It occurred, or was "revealed" to its author when awake at night; and the trouble it cost him, interrupting serious as well as secular avocations, caused him at first no little anxiety as to its origin, whether it were from heaven or from hell. A curious circumstance removed all doubt. The "Proslogion" was several times committed to

[1] John xi. 51; xvi. 13; and Luke xxii. 32. [2] Gieseler, ii. 2, 229.

writing, yet, notwithstanding the utmost care, as often unaccountably lost or defaced. Anselm was, therefore, convinced that the foul fiend, afraid of his arguments, was watching to destroy them; and he, therefore, caused them to be written out afresh on parchment "in God's name."

Anselm's object was, to furnish a proof of God's existence which should be complete in itself. He attempted to deduce being from thought thus:—God is the highest and greatest that can be conceived. Now this "highest and greatest" is not a mere conception (a thing *in intellectu*), but a reality (*in re*); for if not, there would be something conceivably still higher and greater, *i. e.* that which has objective reality, which is a contradiction; God, therefore, does really exist. To this argument the obvious reply was immediately made,[1] that it is impossible to deduce real existence from the idea of existence. It by no means follows that a chimæra ever existed merely because the mind is able to conceive it. If an account be given of a man unknown to us, the account may certainly reflect our own general idea of a man, and be so far real and true, although in all other respects utterly false; but when we are told of God as the highest and greatest of beings, our experience supplies us with no analogies whatever, and we cannot be sure that the conception has any reality at all. The argument is a *petitio principii;* it assumes the existence which has to be proved. Suppose we were to be told of a lost island in the deep, exceeding in excellence and beauty all other islands, and were called upon to believe the existence of the island because existence is a prior condition to beauty, might not the narrator be fairly required to prove the existence first, instead of relying on the alleged excellence and beauty for a presumptive implication of it?

The attempt to rationalise the Trinity, to show how one is three, and three one, could, of course, only be an elaborate absurdity. According to Anselm, the divine essence is thought; and the supreme Spirit, meditating on itself, generated a self-identical image, its thought or word. There is, however, a difference between the two; since one has the peculiarity of origination, the other of derivation; one begets, the other is begotten. Yet although the begetting cannot be the begotten, nor the Father the Son, they are still identical; for as the Father is spirit, so the Son is spirit; the spirit's thought is a reflex of itself, and so they are not two, but one spirit. It is,

[1] By Gaunilo, a monk of Marmontiers.

therefore, no contradiction to say that the Son is both derivative and original, since he is one with the Father. If it be asked how a being can be derived from another being without any dissimilarity or inequality between them, Anselm replies with a virtual abandonment of argument, that we must not think of God after the analogy of created things, since in Him there is no priority or posteriority, no greater or less, no want or difference; admitting, in fact, the impossibility of reasoning about God.[1]

In the treatise "cur Deus homo" Anselm endeavours to explain the atonement; to show that "reason obliges us to believe all that the catholic faith declares respecting Christ." The Fathers treated the atonement as a victory over the devil,[2] who, having through Adam's sin acquired a right over the souls of men, agreed to take in exchange the far more valuable soul of Christ.[3] He found, however, that he had made an unprofitable bargain; since after he had got the stipulated soul of the Redeemer, he was unable (according to Psalms xvi. 10, and Acts ii. 24, 27, 31) to keep possession of it;[4] and so became the dupe of his own folly, and the laughing-stock of God.[5] This unworthy myth, which became the subject of a sacred farce during the middle ages,[6] soon proved to be repulsive to Christian feeling; yet Gregory of Nazianzus found a difficulty in explaining why, unless to satisfy some similar diabolical claim, the sacrifice of Christ was at all needed, since there was no other being requiring it, and God could not have wanted it on his own account. In the scholastic feeling of substituting

[1] The attempt to show the inapplicability of incarnation to any of the persons of the Trinity, except the Son, produces a curious list of hypothetical possibilities. See Baur, Dreieinigkeit, vol. ii. p. 405.

[2] Hebr. ii. 14; and see the Ascensio Isaiæ xi. 16; also Ignatius to the Ephesians, ch. xix.

[3] See Origen on Matthew xx. 28; and Baur, Versöhnungslehre, pp. 35, 43, 47, &c.

[4] Gregory of Nyssa explains the deception differently. The devil, in procuring the death of a sinless person, exceeded his right, and thereby forfeited the claim he really possessed. In venturing to treat Christ on the footing of a common man he did not perceive the divine nature latent beneath the human form, and which, like a hook concealed by the bait (αγκιστρον της Θεοτητος), made him the victim of his own greediness; fulfilling Job. xl. 19, and forcing him, like Saturn of old, to vomit what he had before swallowed. See Baur, Ib. pp. 77, 79, and 102 note.

[5] Baur, Ib. p. 51.

[6] In the "festive and delightful" mystery entitled "Belial," by the Rev. John de Teramo, dedicated to Pope Urban VI., in the year 1484. See Baur's Versöhnung. p. 80.

logical reasons for mythical imagery, Anselm, discarding the obsolete by-play with Satan, undertook to prove the necessity of the atonement from the very nature of sin and of God. Sin, he said, is the withholding a debt due to God. The debt so due from all rational natures is perfect subjection of the will; he who withholds from God this homage dishonours Him, and sins. Now the divine order and justice require that sin should be atoned for. But to atone for sin it is no longer enough to pay the debt originally owing; more must now be given to expiate the guilt of withholding it; and since man at every moment of his existence was already bound to the utmost exertion of his faculties in fulfilment of his duty to God, it is plain that, since he can do no more after sinning than he could before, he is utterly incapable of making an atonement for himself. Indeed, if the whole world were placed in one scale and the most trivial point of duty in the other, duty would require the sacrifice of the alternative; so that, since God exacts a quantitative satisfaction, it follows that the satisfaction for sin must be more than equal in value to the whole world, or everything except God. No one, therefore, can make the required satisfaction but God himself; and here the divine justice, which would have inexorably required punishment, became tempered with the divine goodness, which alone would have granted unconditional forgiveness; so that, according to the laws of moral mathematics, the course of Providence described between the two opposing forces the diagonal of atonement. Atonement could only be made by a being co-equal with God; on the other hand, since it was a debt due from man, it was necessary that God should become man in order to unite every condition of ability and propriety. The same nature which sinned in Adam was, therefore, made to pay the forfeit of sin in Christ; and it seemed remarkable that as sin came into the world by one created without woman, so salvation was procured by one born without the aid of man. He atoned for man, not by mere obedience, for to this he was already bound equally with all rational natures, but by his death, which, both physically and morally speaking, was a gratuitous act, infinitely surpassing in expiatory virtue the sins of the whole world. The latter point is, however, scarcely proved. For if, as Anselm affirms, the existence of Christ exactly counterpoised in amount of good the evil of his destruction, it is difficult to understand how the atonement could be complete if supposed to include a satisfaction for the guilt of his destroyers.

3. *Nominalism and Realism.*

Scholasticism was based on realism; *i.e.* the theory making thought a reliable criterium of being and of truth. Its whole method depended on the presumption that what to the logical understanding seems incontrovertible, is really and objectively so; that the inference, which it is impossible to doubt, is necessarily true. Its syllogisms would have been obviously meaningless, if the terms and propositions out of which they were constructed had not been supposed at least to have an unquestionably valid foundation. Roscelin, however, a clear-headed French ecclesiastic, though admitting the necessity of reconciling faith with the understanding, arrived, in attempting to do so, at an opposite and heterodox result. He disputed Anselm's vague, but decidedly unitarian view of the Trinity on nominalist grounds, treating the universal as unreal and conceptional only, or as having no objective existence beyond the mind. There is no colour, he said, apart from coloured objects, no wisdom apart from mind, no whole distinct from its parts; neither can there be one God composed of three Gods; for, if so, if the three persons are not to be considered distinct as three angels or three souls, all the divine persons must have been incarnate together; and tritheism were a less dangerous extreme than that of humanising the triune God. Anselm, on the contrary, placed all reality in the universal. Like Erigena, and many prior[1] and subsequent philosophers, he considered all things as existing in and through the one Supreme Being, who is also Supreme reason and Supreme truth; and estimating the universe as it were from above, from the intellectual rather than the empirical side, ever allowed the plurality of divine personages prescribed by tradition to fall back into the ill-distinguished relations or attributes of a single Being, the unity alone tolerated by reason. Thus opened the important controversy about the sources of knowledge and the nature of the processes of mind, to which all previous philosophy may be considered as introductory, and which has never been completely set at rest. It

[1] Gerbert, for instance, makes God the true author of logic. "Non enim ars illa quæ dividit genera in species et species in genera resolvit, ab humanis machinationibus est facta, sed in naturâ rerum ab auctore omnium artium quæ veræ artes sunt, et à sapientibus inventa."

was the great problem bequeathed for human consideration by Plato and Aristotle, the alternative of the "Ideas" or the "Categories," an alternative briefly stated by Porphyry in the question, "whether genera and species are things in themselves, or mere mental conceptions?" The philosopher Boëthius, one of the most prominent links between ancient and modern thought, leaves the question undecided, in one place answering it affirmatively, but elsewhere speaking in terms which might be quoted on behalf of nominalism.[1] The unsettled controversy was handed down through successive commentators to the schools of the middle ages, when Berengar at Tours, and Lanfranc and Anselm in Normandy, respectively represented the free and the authoritative treatment of theology. Roscelin's application of the nominalistic view, and its heretical result, at once turned the hesitating scale in favour of realism; and thus, as we are told by John of Salisbury, he caused, by imprudent advocacy, the temporary defeat of his own system.

Anselm's realism was extreme. It went the length of asserting "universalia ante rem;" the separate prior and exclusive existence of the universal; and William of Champeaux, the teacher of Abelard, denied, on Anselm's principle, the existence of essential differences, making all things to be mere accidental varieties of one universal substance. Abelard boasts of having, by force of argument, compelled his master to abandon this extreme form of realism. His own view appears to have been the mitigated realism of Aristotle, not denying the reality of universals, but only their separate and exclusive reality. From this time even nominalists felt the necessity of accounting for general ideas, of explaining what induces the mind to go in each instance beyond empirical impressions; and scholastic metaphysics generally took the form of a modified realism, claiming real existence for universals, but existence in the individual, not anterior or apart from it; "universalia," not "ante rem," but "in re." Universals were real, and also subjective and conceptional; but their existence, even as conceptions of the mind, was reliable and true, because exactly corresponding to their objective reality in things, from which they could not, it was thought, have been abstracted unless already contained in them.

[1] "Plato genera et species cæteraque non modo intelligi universalia, sed etiam esse atque præter corpora subsistere putat. Aristoteles vero intelligi quidem incorporalia atque universalia, sed subsistere in sensilibus putat."

4. *Abelard.*

The necessity of making faith and reason agree was the admitted basis of scholasticism. But the agreement might be asserted either on the liberal or the conservative side, by the Christian philosopher, or the mere philosophising churchman. Abelard was a believer, yet professed to believe nothing that could not be proved. To a saying of Gregory the Great to the effect that faith has no merit unless it be irrational and arbitrary, he opposed the maxim of Ecclesiasticus,[1] "He who is hasty in belief is light-minded." This hastiness and levity, he said, consist in blind acquiescence in what is told us, without discussion or comprehension; and if it be urged that simple belief is the very essence of Christianity, the obvious reply is, that this rudimentary condition of the faith is out of date, and is now only resorted to as an excuse for ignorance. Abelard, however, employed his skill in dialectics, not in discussing the articles of faith, but in defending them; deprecating only the narrow prejudices of those who were frightened at the very shadow of inquiry, and who decried all science as dangerous. The most startling and incomprehensible of all dogmas was the Trinity; this, therefore, Abelard especially undertook to defend, asserting, like the Alexandrian Fathers, the virtual Christianity of Plato and other ancient teachers both Gentile and Jewish. Although confessing God to be inscrutable, he was not to be deterred from attempting at least what had not altogether failed even among the heathen. He would explain the mystery of the three persons by referring to three moral attributes constituting divine perfection, power, wisdom, and goodness; the Father being more especially the power, the Son the wisdom of God, the Holy Ghost his goodness or love. If it be asked why three attributes or personifications, and no more, are ascribed to God, omitting justice, eternity, &c., the unexpected answer is, that three alone are sanctioned by authority, and that divine secrets are inscrutable.[2] The three persons, in Abelard's view, are not numerically distinct, but are only different relations or modifications of one substance; they are like three persons in grammar, differing as between

[1] Ch. xix. 4.

[2] Baur's Dreieinigkeit, ii. 469.

themselves, yet all predicated of the same individual. In short, his attempted solution is an appeal to those human analogies which he had confessed to be incommensurate with the subject; and, after much inconsistency and subtlety, unavoidable perhaps in a defender of the Trinity, he evades the point at issue, by ever returning to a merely relative diversity in God, and his substantial unity.[1]

Abelard's apologetic character in defence of dogma seems to have depended on the mere accidental circumstances of his being a churchman. In filling it, he shows a disposition to adopt the most liberal views, and makes large concessions to rationalism.[2] In another age, and under other circumstances, he would probably have opposed what he defended, as may be seen in the almost sceptical tendency of his work "Sic et non," or the glorious contradictions of Patristic theology. God, he considers, could never have really become man, since He cannot change, begin to be, or cease to be; and if God is changeless, the incarnation can only have been a peculiar manifestation of the divine influence enlightening and perfecting humanity, and the work of redemption was not, as Anselm made it, a satisfaction to divine justice, but an expedient of divine love, working a moral change by Christ's doctrine and example. The divine lawgiver exercises a discretionary sway, which, though incomprehensible, is just and right; and fulfilment of his law is summed up in love, estimated not in outward act, but in conscientious intention.

Amidst many loose, and often conflicting statements, Abelard's liberal tendencies are unmistakable. But he pleaded for rational views among semi-barbarians to whom rationality was odious, who made the Lord's Supper into a conjuring

[1] The arguments with which Abelard had to contend were like the following:— God is one unique divine substance. But if God begets God, *i. e.* the Father the Son, it follows that substance begets substance, and the begetter being one with the begotten he begets himself. This contradicts authority as well as reason. If the Father begets himself and is his own son, there is a "confusion of the persons and a mingling of the substance." If God begets God, he must either beget himself or another God. Another God he cannot, for there is but one God, and God cannot beget himself; for if God could beget himself, he would be his own father. If God be his own father, then either God the Father is his own father, or not God the Father is his own father. But God is father only of the son, and not his own father, &c. Baur, Dreieinigkeit, p. 478.

[2] He allows, for instance, that the prophets were often unwittingly in the wrong; and that, although the difficulties and contradictions in canonical Scripture must be ascribed to errors of transcription or interpretation, it is otherwise with the Fathers, who are to be read "non cum credendi necessitate, sed cum judicandi libertate."

trick, and referred to priestly dictation the commonest concerns of every-day life.[1] No wonder, under such circumstances, that even his moderate liberalism should be offensive to the church. To his opponents, he seemed to degrade Christianity into a mere philosophy, and to reduce its professors to the level of the uninitiated heathen. The zealous churchman, Bernhard of Clairvaulx, denounced Abelard for indiscreetly prying into divine things, and attempting to explain the inexplicable. Orthodoxy required that each of the three divine persons should be considered to include the Godhead in its totality, whereas Abelard, by his application of the categories, heretically made them subordinate the one to the other. "What!" cries Bernhard, "can be more heretical than to refuse to believe what you cannot understand? This 'master' Peter sees nothing darkly, but all face to face. He dishonours the church, perplexing the simple-minded with his rusty lore. Simple faith is scoffed at, the secrets of God are hunted out, the deepest mysteries invaded, and the Fathers derided, who wished such matters to be hushed and kept out of sight. True piety is content with believing, and shuns discussion." It is related that the prelates assembled at the Council of Sens which condemned Abelard, went to sleep, one and all, over their cups after dinner, during the reading of the offensive volume. Upon the occurrence of an objectionable passage, the reader interrogated the somnolent judges —"Damnatis?" to which a drowsy voice answered, "Damnamus;" and the remainder, aroused by the noise, responded in half articulate, but appropriate chorus, "namus," *i. e.* "we swim" (in debauchery); and thus the man, who night and day exercised himself in the law of the Lord, was condemned by the satellites of Bacchus.

5. *Mediæval Mysticism.*

Religion is oftener a matter of feeling than of argument. Its objects lie within the sphere of sentiment and mystery; and the longevity of peculiar dogmas which would have been cut short by logical discussion, becomes indefinitely prolonged

[1] Anselm, for instance, implored the Pope to assign him a socius, who was to dictate the disposal of his life, "cujus jussis vitam disponeret."

by unreasoning enthusiasm. They survive the recollection of their real meaning, and the mind's eagerness becomes alone a sufficient ground for pertinaciously clinging to them. Bernhard of Clairvaulx and Hugo of St. Victor claim, as do all mystics, an intuitive power of comprehending divine things apart from and superior to reason. They place the highest aim of rational beings in the sublime knowledge of truth enjoyed uninterruptedly by celestial natures. The soul is supposed to arrive at this eminence through a course of moral conduct, devotional acts and services, fervid prayer, intense study of the Scripture, ascetic self-denial, and renunciation of the world; purified by these, it gradually ascends to its highest flights of mystic self-abandonment and rapture. Mysticism shuns clear definitions, and thus offers safe ground for indulging speculation with impunity, since its element is paradox, and it may allowably concede a hazy something which is not understood. It readily accepts each dogma in its received meaning, if inapplicable or unintelligible, with silent deferential acquiescence, but with more decided and express welcome if it happen to tally with sentimental analogies, or the special conditions of a system. In this way, not only the doctrines, but even the external ceremonies of the church, were found to correspond with the secret requirements of the soul, and orthodoxy was in every point more resolutely defended than ever. Bernhard was fanatical and credulous; he pronounced the absurd visions of St. Hildegard to be of celestial origin; and lent a ready ear to any calumny against the argumentative schoolmen, of whom he was the declared foe. The dialecticians and the mystics pursued opposite ends; one wished to make things clear, the others revelled in indistinctness; yet mysticism is, in a measure, inseparable from all theology; and it is not easy, or, perhaps, possible, always to distinguish accurately between dialectical systems professing to explain, yet often confessing their inability to do so, from the more elaborate forms of mediæval mysticism (those, *e. g.* of Richard of St. Victor and Bonaventura), which occasionally resort to scholastic argument, though generally relying on the direct and instantaneous illumination enjoyed by higher beings. The difference is chiefly one of degree; the former encouraging intellect, the other referring all to feeling and imagination. Both may be considered as elementary efforts of mind to wrestle with dogmatic tyranny; not, indeed, venturing as yet to assert unconditional freedom, but

proceeding to examine the texture of its fetters, and, as it were, to turn the tyranny into constitutional government by making itself the umpire and ultimate authority for the rule submitted to. Both mysticism and scholasticism, though immediately calculated to defend dogma, tended in different ways to its eventual overthrow. The arguments arrayed in its defence proved to be the most effectual exposure of its inconsistencies; and the sentiment which undertook to be its champion subverted its foundations, being, in reality, an appeal from spiritual absolutism and authority to mental independence.

6. *Peter Lombard.*

The first schoolmen did not give to theology the form and pretensions of a science. Their attempts to explain were partial and desultory. A new æra began from the commencement of the thirteenth century with the famous "Sentences" of Peter Lombard, the earliest attempt to collect the whole of dogmatical Christianity into a regular system, based on Scriptural and Patristic authority. After this effort had been made, it was no longer possible to treat one doctrine without reference to others; and scholasticism expanded to its full prolixity of question and counter-question. The "Sentences," which were founded on the labours of the Fathers, especially those of Augustin, continued down to the Reformation to be the text-book of theologians, whose further lucubrations were only voluminous commentaries on them. Their subject-matter was arranged under four heads—1st, The triune nature of God; 2nd, Creation, the angels, and the moral condition of man; 3rd, The incarnation and atonement; and 4th, The sacraments and the future life.

Although the "Master of the Sentences" made no claim to originality, but only to give a summary of the articles of faith, he was often obliged to attempt at least to reconcile those contradictions which systematic arrangement brought more clearly into view. But orthodoxy lay between Scylla and Charybdis, through which no one unsustained by the prop of authority or the wings of mysticism could safely venture. In regard to the Trinity, for instance, it was impossible to reconcile the postulate of equality of the persons and their separate totality of Godhead, with that attaching to each a specific idea and function. If the Father's wisdom were independent of the Son's, how

could the Holy Ghost be the love of Father and Son, whose love as well as wisdom and power ought to be self-centred and independently complete? And how could the Father be said to have begotten the divine essence, or the divine essence the Son, the Son being himself the divine essence, which, as one unique and absolute, could not certainly have begotten itself? The "master" was fiercely attacked for his sentiments on these points as an "heretical" and "insane" person by a certain Abbot Joachim, whose book, however, was in its turn condemned by the Pope. A more serious quarrel grew out of the juxtaposition of the many possible views to be taken of the incarnation. If God "became" man, he underwent a change incompatible with immutability. And if, without any essential change, very God and very man became blended together, Christ was a compound being, or, rather, not one, but two beings. Or, lastly, if, to avoid these difficulties, it were said that the Godhead, itself unchanged, assumed human nature, the assumed manhood could only have been an unsubstantial veil for the concealed divinity; a mere "habitus" or "indumentum" having no positive existence. This inevitable inference gave offence, and John of Cornwall undertook to refute it. He showed that Christ was an "aliquis homo;" and further, that his human nature was "a somewhat."[1] "When," he argued, "the twelve Apostles were with the Lord, there were twelve men and one over; this extra man was Christ; *ergo*, Christ was 'aliquis homo.'" "But Christ, in respect of his humanity, was a man; to be a man is to be somewhat; *ergo*, Christ was somewhat," &c. To say that Christ, after assuming human form, was no substantially human being, were as irrational as to pretend that the appearance of the Holy Ghost was no real dove. When unmoved by such arguments, the adversary insisted that Christ could not be substantially God and substantially man at the same time; and that if substantially man, he must have ceased to be when he ceased to exist as a man, the champion of orthodoxy could only reply by throwing his syllogisms to the winds, declaring that we must not attempt to reason upon divine things; and that what is true in religion is often philosophically false.[2]

[1] "Secundum quod homo esse aliquid," *i.e.* that he possessed perfect humanity as well as divinity.

[2] "Hæc omnia philosophica; si virgo est, nunquam peperit; si Deus est, non est homo—et hujusmodi infinita, quæ philosophis videntur verissima, catholicis omnibus

7. *Aquinas and Scotus.*

When the objects of scholasticism had been fully defined, it branched into varied systems, each having a certain relation to the others, and pursuing the same general method. The latter, consisting of definition and division, induction and syllogism, was notoriously taken from Aristotle; and the increasing taste for the study of Aristotle was itself symptomatic of the more healthy intellectual activity which made the transition from the æra of unmitigated theological mysticism to that of modern science.[1] At this æra scholasticism became more exclusively theological, and the taste for other studies was proportionably discouraged. The theological "summaries," or systems of the great schoolmen, are far more extensive in plan, but at the same time less connectedly coherent, than the partial treatises which preceded them; often passing abruptly from point to point, and borrowing premises upon which to argue from all kinds of sources indiscriminately. For instance, Duns Scotus infers the propriety of ascribing fruition to God ("utrum Deo conveniat frui") from a fanciful analogy of the equilibrium of spiritual natures with that of material bodies, each of which has a gravitating centre of its own, though ultimately dependent on the earth; so that since enjoyment consists in union with a desired object, the gratification of love, or of the impulse of the will towards good, which created beings only feel dependently and partially, is in God continuous and absolute.[2] Generally speaking, experience of the finite is made the basis of all reasoning on the infinite; the visible being the ladder by which alone we

constat esse falsissima. Habeant ergo philosophorum argumenta locum suum in his, quæ secundum naturam se habent, non in his, quæ contra naturam mirabiliter fiunt et facta sunt."

[1] At the beginning of the 13th century the writings of Aristotle were prohibited by the church; thirty years afterwards they were more highly esteemed than ever as the bulwark of the Catholic theology.

[2] A reference to the theological summary of Aquinas will readily exemplify the vain questions propounded by the schoolmen, and their absurd mode of dealing with them. In part i. 92, 1, for instance, the question is asked, is it reasonable to suppose that woman was made out of man contrary to the analogy of other animals? and the account in Genesis is defended against objections by adducing a Scripture text, a passage from the Ethics of Aristotle, and by referring to the dignity of man, the necessity of supplying him with an additional reason to love woman, and the providential design of making the relation of man to woman prefigure that of Christ to the church.

rise to contemplate the invisible; and therefore, although the "ontological argument" above-mentioned may be in a sense correct, inasmuch as man has a natural consciousness of God's existence, still this consciousness is by no means conclusive for us, like the axioms or first principles of mathematics, since its terms are ideal and beyond the range of our experience. Aquinas asserts the utter impossibility of comprehending the Trinity by means of reason, adding that attempts to prove it can only encourage unbelief. This Duns Scotus admits, but with certain restrictions. He says that visible analogies necessarily suggest the Creator to be one; but that since every created being is in some sort a plurality bound up in unity, there do exist natural indications of a Trinity which may fortify the believer, though they may not be sufficiently strong to convince the incredulous. The arguments brought forward by himself against the Trinity are certainly far more intelligible and satisfactory than those he alleges in its favour; and it should be observed that in scholastic treatment the careful statements and counter-statements of conflicting evidences on each question[1] illustrate the *bonâ fide* character of previous compilations of Christian paradox, such as the "sic et non" of Abelard, and the fifty-two knotty points of Stephanus Gobarus,[2] which might have been otherwise imagined to have been intended rather to expose the absurdities of dogma than to lead the way to their explanation. In many instances scholasticism contradicts itself unwittingly; in others, foreseeing discomfiture, it admits the futility of attempts at proof, and leaves the dogma as it found it. Of the great schoolmen, Albertus Magnus, Aquinas, and Duns Scotus, the former is distinguished for variety of material, the second for perfection of system, the third for dialectical subtlety. In all of them theology embraces the moral problem of man's relation to God; being an attempt to explain the disunion or "Fall" which interrupted the original continuity of the Absolute, and the means of happiness provided by way of restoration or redemption. This happiness may be considered either objectively,

[1] In every article, the general question or proposition suggested by the creed or the Bible is met by a series of rationalistic objections ("videtur quod non," "præterea," &c.), to which a rejoinder is then made by a "per contra" on the side of faith, with proofs and testimonies; the substance of each article is the magisterial "respondeo dicendum," or arbitrement of the "angelic" or "seraphic" doctor on the point at issue; lastly, the inference is confirmed by replies to the objections first taken.

[2] Photius Cod. 232.

or with especial regard to the beatified subject; either as centred in God, the grand object of aspiration, or as in itself constituting that true end of man which God intervenes to assist him in attaining. The one view produces a more speculative, the other a practical theology; and such are the relative positions of Aquinas and Scotus. To the former the aim of spiritual beings is mainly intellectual, consisting in contemplation and knowledge of the truth, to know the first cause being the last end of man;[1] to Scotus, the faith on which theology rests is a moral attitude of the mind, religion is essentially duty, and its end, consisting in happiness or enjoyment of God, is not an enlarged receptivity of the intellect, but a conformity of the will. To this antithesis of an ideal cognition and volition in man, corresponds an analogous diversity of view in regard to God. To Aquinas, God is the essence or universal "form" of things; and whereas form, as the object of ordinary thought, is limited by matter, it is not so in God, in whom there is nothing "potential" or imperfect, and in whom therefore being and cognition are identical. The same may be said of the will of God; for will is the desire of good; good is only a particular aspect of being in respect of desirableness; everything is desirable in proportion to the perfection of its being; so that in a being absolutely perfect being and goodness are one.[2] God, therefore, the absolute good, being his own object, his will, like his being, is self-determined, and is in fact necessity. In refutation of this Duns Scotus adduces the admitted existence of evil, and that of freedom and contingency in finite natures;[3] the bond of necessity loosened in its inferior links, is thus removed altogether, and the first cause enjoys absolutely the freedom partially existing in all. He is pure volition or arbitrary caprice, determined by no particular motive or object, for He does not will good because it is good, but good is good because He wills it. The fundamental discrepancy pervades the two systems, that of Aquinas leaning to a philosophical transcendentalism, that of Scotus adhering more closely to the literal items of church tradition. God, says Aquinas, is simple and one; his several attributes are only

[1] "In nullo alio quærenda est ultima felicitas quam in operatione intellectûs; cum nullum desiderium tam in sublime feratur sicut desiderium intelligendæ veritatis."

[2] "Omne ens in quantum est ens est bonum."

[3] Any one denying this position, he says, is not to be argued with; he must be convinced by blows, thrashed until he admits the "possible contingency" of being allowed to escape with his life.

conceptional aspects of one divine perfection, and the process through which he became three is not like the changes in material things, but a spiritual emanation or act whose effect remains immanent in the actor. Duns Scotus, on the contrary, maintains the divine attributes, like the divine persons, to be real distinctions; for were these perfections conceptional only, not real, God would not be an absolutely perfect being, all conceptional existence being inferior to real, &c. Duns Scotus contradicted the infinitude of Christ's merit asserted by Aquinas, on the ground that his humanity alone suffered; yet practically it comes to the same thing, for Christ's merit depends on God's acceptance, and is thus susceptible of arbitrary indefinite expansion, so as to comprehend the indefinite number of persons benefiting by it.

Scholasticism may be considered as refuted by the contradictory character of its leading systems; but the refutation is made still more complete by the ever-recurring antagonism within each system of the jarring elements it undertook to reconcile. Nothing is more remarkable in the schoolmen than the contrast between profession and performance; for while undertaking to show the reasonableness of dogma, they are constantly obliged to admit the very reverse, so that reason and revelation, nature and grace, become more conspicuously severed from the abortive effort to unite them. While asserting Aristotle's claim for theology as the "first philosophy" and prince of the sciences, they cannot help confounding this really noble theme with conventional dogma, and their views, which should have embraced the universe, are fettered to the cloister. The system of Albertus Magnus strikingly shows the impossibility of meeting by one set of explanations the requirements of opposite tendencies. His philosophical theory is based on emanation; his religion requires a creation, and an abrupt separation between creature and creator, which again his view of the soul's perfectibility will not allow him to carry out. Creation, he says, is God's free act; yet God necessarily emanates, and the exuberance of created forms flows from the very nature of divine intelligence and goodness. Considered philosophically, the world is an unbroken series of gradations descending from Supreme Intelligence down to the lowest material forms, in all of which divine power is fully and effectively present, producing from within all their changes and movements; and yet in each being God's power is limited by

the peculiar capacities of that being, and the natural order is crossed and interrupted by the necessarily irregular development of the intellectual and moral, which refuses to blend harmoniously with it. Through fear of materialism and unwillingness to account for moral phenomena by natural laws, he is obliged to sever the realm of grace from that of nature, and, while anxiously asserting the higher arrangements of the moral world to be based on those of the natural, he superadds to the latter an entirely different and exceptional agency through which rational beings, overleaping the natural barriers, press on towards perfection. The same self-contradiction recurs repeatedly in Aquinas, whose wonderful industry and vigour of intellect often contrast strangely with puerility of aim and feebleness of proof. He admits the impossibility that anything really contradicting reason can be true; the Author of nature being author also of our nature, his revelation, though it may transcend reason, cannot be really inconsistent with it. In divine matters, indeed, such as God, the Trinity, &c., reason is defective; its data being imperfect, its conclusions must be so too; all it can do on behalf of the faith, is to offer suggestions in disproof of its utter incredibility. Yet Aquinas does venture into the mysteries of faith, for instance the existence of God and the persons of the Trinity. God, he says, is pure act, without dormant energy or potentiality; his thought and being are one, his causality co-extensive with his knowledge; yet his knowledge is found, after all, to transcend the limits of being, and He is cognisant of what neither was, is, nor shall be. He is simple and one; all that can be positively said of Him amounts only to a negation; yet we must believe the church definitions of his several attributes and persons, although they are plainly shown to be nothing more than relative aspects of the absolute.[1] In the system of Aquinas, the will and intellect of God, his necessary and voluntary action, have no real coherence. A providential government of necessity mingles with one of occasional expedients; the incarnation, for example, was a necessary consequence of divine goodness, disposing the Almighty to unite Himself with man; yet if it be asked why, being eternally good, He was not also eternally incarnate, recourse is had to the fortuitous circumstances of the creature to account for the occurrence in time of an event presumed to be inherent in

[1] "In Deo non est aliud 'esse' relationis et 'esse' essentiæ, sed unum et idem."

fallibly true by the church, and to establish faith on the basis of ratiocination. Its reasonings were founded on a twofold assumption; not only that the doctrines of the church were infallible, but that the forms of thought applied to them were infallible also; in other words, that thought is a criterium of being, that general ideas denote real existence, and that whatever appears to reason inevitable and necessary must be true.[1] Upon the basis of such truth, derived from the empirical consciousness, was raised a vast fabric of logical argumentation, and the nominalistic scepticism of Roscelin was unheeded in an age of intellectual enterprise eagerly pressing on to new conquests in the realms of thought. Anselm was the first to make the relation of faith to knowledge an object of deliberate research. The inquiry was taken up with alacrity, and was naturally first directed to those doctrinal points which seemed most important in themselves, and offered the best opportunity for the exercise of dialectics. The process, however, soon extended itself over the whole field of dogma, as reduced by Peter Lombard to a manageable form or code; the whole of which was forthwith to be made amenable to the laws of the understanding, and to be laid, so confirmed and fortified, at the feet of the authority from which it emanated. Whatever ingenuity could do for the logical establishment of dogma was unquestionably done; but its efforts were foiled by the insuperable difficulties of the undertaking, and the more elaborate the systems, the more evident was their inefficiency. The system of Aquinas was a vindication of the powers of the understanding, a direct attempt to transform belief into knowledge. But the understanding is obliged to confess God to be infinite, whereas all human cognition is finite. Where difference and definition cease the understanding has nothing to act upon; and consequently the infinitude of God is no object of human cognition. Yet scholasticism, presuming an intimate relation and agreement between being and thought, still felt bound to provide positive definitions of God, striving to bring Him nearer to human comprehension by connecting Him with the attributes presumed to be generally essential to spiritual existence, understanding and will. But this led only to a conflict of contradictory positions, and every attempt to form a positive estimate of the divine essence necessarily fell back into the indefinable and negative, so that the

[1] It will be observed that the "realism" of the schoolmen corresponds to what we should now call "idealism."

the Creator's being, and it is admitted that but for sin, there need have been no incarnation at all. Christ endured extreme anguish; first, because he atoned for the sin of all men; secondly, because his bodily and spiritual organisation were such as to be in the highest degree susceptible of pain; thirdly, because the suffering endured must have been proportionate to the benefit derived, &c.; yet all the while his essential bliss is said to have remained undiminished.[1] Man is appealed to to solve the riddle of the universe, to connect the visible with the invisible; yet man is the greatest riddle of all; and though, in pursuance of the general theory, his prime mover and felicity should have been in the intellect, the Christian estimate of the superiority of love of God compels the writer to admit that intellectual action is imperfect until "completed" by fealty of the will. His argument for miracles is eminently self-contradictory. He admits the order of nature, as inherently dependent on perfect reason and goodness, to be necessary and undeviating, for God is immanent in creation, the very nature and being of all things. Nevertheless a miracle, or deviation from natural order, is possible; because the order, as dependent on secondary causes, is *contingent*, and God, in appointing it, reserved a power of altering it or deviating from it. But this supposes the order of secondary causes to be distinct from that of the first cause, a supposition excluded by the original hypothesis;[2] so that to make room for the miracles incompatible with reason, but required by authority, the whole creation is surreptitiously got out of the way, the necessary order replaced by a casual one, and the conditions under which alone the universe can exist are made impossible. Faith is based on miracle, and miracle on faith; the universality of faith being indeed the greatest miracle of all.[3]

8. *Fall of Scholasticism.*

Scholasticism was an attempt to convert theology into science; it was that epoch of Christian thought when the mind first addressed itself to understand the dogmas presented to it as in-

[1] "Superior pars animæ perfectè fruebatur Christo patiente."

[2] "Semper secundum agens agit in voluntate primi; nam primum agens movet secundum ad agendum; et secundum hoc omnia agunt in virtute ipsius Dei."

[3] Summa Theo. i. 1, 2.

effort to know God could result only in a tacit confession of ignorance. When, in order to avoid these difficulties, Duns Scotus substituted will as a principle in place of intellect, and made religion consist not in knowledge but duty, he abandoned the original scholastic pretension, and virtually confessed its failure. He made it clear that not only the peculiar dogmas of Christianity, but the inferences of natural religion, are incapable of being strictly proved, and must ultimately be referred to faith or revelation. For an intelligible necessity he, therefore, substituted the absolute freedom of the divine institutions, to which man had only to submit with unconditional resignation. The appeal from intellect to conscience implied the discomfiture of the former, and it was plain that if theology was still to maintain its ground, it must be on its own absolute, unassisted authority. Thus the effort to make good the deficiency of a merely external faith had completely failed, and had accomplished the very reverse of what it had intended. The ingenuity which, in full reliance on church infallibility, had succeeded in accumulating every imaginable contradiction to the received dogmas for the purpose only of triumphant confutation, now appeared in a different light; the disputes of the Thomists and Scotists about the immaculate conception and other paradoxes became offensive and wearisome, and men were tired of listening to never-ending arguments about ridiculous trifles in which so much was to be said that was equally convincing or irrelevant on both sides. Infidelity became common, and many were the scoffers who deridingly appealed to theological disputants to leave off studying Augustin, and to look for once into Averroes. It was reserved for later times to collect from these premises the necessity of submitting the peculiarities of dogmas which experience had shown to be untenable to renewed philosophical research; to the rude intellect of the time the immediate inference could only be that the church was in the right, although reason had not yet succeeded in discovering an intelligible foundation for its dicta. Durandus developed the consequences of the doctrine of Duns Scotus, showing that theology is not demonstrative but practical, and that right action with faith, and with immortality in view, is its only proper object. Faith having thus abandoned its appeal to reason, it remained only to sever the metaphysical link which had been the secret of their temporary alliance, in order to determine its dissolution. This was done by the no-

minalism of William of Occam, one of the rigid Franciscans,[1] who declared general ideas to be mere abstractions of the mind, and consequently utterly incapable of affording a basis for demonstrating the truths of revelation. He treated the latter as independent of argument and probability, asserting the duty of believing everything maintained by the church, however incredible; *e. g.* that God might not merely have become man, but have been an ass, a stone, or a piece of wood. He treated all that the Fathers had superadded to the doctrines of the Apostles and prophets as supplementary revelations; and, although admitting with many other theologians that it was more consistent with authority as well as reason to suppose the substance of the Eucharistic bread and wine to be conjoined with that of Christ than, contrary to the evidence of the senses, to disappear to make place for it, he yet accepted the larger paradox, *i. e.* transubstantiation instead of consubstantiation, in deference to the determination of the church. Scotus had continued to maintain a formal agreement between thought and being; Occam denied any necessary connection between them, treating general ideas as mere arbitrary signs, like words or other symbols. Of the two assumptions implied in scholasticism, the truth of dogma, and the certainty of the processes of thought employed to prove them, the latter was withdrawn, while the former was the more obstinately maintained; and Occam, who only expressed what had already been proved experimentally, that being lies beyond the reach of isolated thought, was himself, though inimical to papal absolutism, one of the most resolute supporters of church authority. Nominalism now met with a very different welcome from that which it received at the outset of the scholastic period, when the mind, confident in its powers, was eager to construct new theories and systems. Its efforts were now exhausted, its hopes disappointed, and its subtle argumentation had become a burthen from which at any sacrifice it was anxious to escape. One position was given up after another, until at length it resigned itself to the self conviction of mere subjectivity, or inability to grasp objective truth. Henceforth a distinction was established between religious and philosophical truth; a thing might be true in religion though false in philosophy; and with this apportionment of mental allegiance between the two

[1] A.D. 1340.

departments commenced the still existing dualism of theology and science. The reservation of theology as an exceptional case was of course then, as now, only a confession of its real helplessness. For, although the renewal of an unconditional submission to authority appeared for the moment to imply an abdication of the rights of reason, its real motive was a profound mistrust of the reasonableness of theological dogmatism, and it required only a greater degree of mental independence to change the attitude assumed by Scotus and Occam into revolt, and to make the scepticism of the reason pass on into scepticism as to the faith. Occam's extravagant obsequiousness to tradition had already an air of irony; and in spite of appearances, the position of faith was seriously altered by the irrevocable loss of an ally, certain ere long to be converted into an enemy.

PART VIII.

DECLINE OF THE PAPACY.

PART VIII.

DECLINE OF THE PAPACY.

1. *Decline of Papal Influence.*

THE policy of Innocent III. and his successors seemed to have succeeded in realising the grand project of a universal theocracy. By protecting the weak against the strong, and taking advantage of the quarrels of rivals, the popes, in their assumed character of general redressors of wrong, had gradually contrived to centralise almost all power in themselves. Advancing from their early pretension to adjudicate upon matrimony and heresy, they claimed a divine right to repress sin, and by virtue of this sweeping prerogative exercised a general control over monarchs and their subjects. Their power to dethrone kings became a canon of ecclesiastical law. They were elected independently of the emperor; but the emperor was to owe his crown to the pope's inauguration and approval. They undertook to dispense with oaths and other obligations, both sacred and civil, to grant unlimited absolution, and to canonise the dead. The grand object of papal ambition, the abrogation of feudal vassalage in regard to the church, combined with the reduction of kings and countries to an acknowledgment of feudal dependency on Rome, was already secured, and half the territorial property of Europe had passed, together with the dominion over its conscience, into ecclesiastical hands. The priests by means of confession exercised a vigilant control over the laity, and the monks were a disciplined army in the interests of the church, whose sway was co-extensive with the boundless credulity of mankind. The reservation of the Concordat of Worms allowing lay investiture by the sceptre instead of the crosier, was but a precarious formality whose value depended on the temper of a credulous age. It were vain to condemn the concessions of powerful monarchs to papal aggres-

sion, when submission was the almost inevitable result of a general belief in papal infallibility and omnipotence. Aggression might occasionally be kept down by a strong government; but the credulity engendering it was beyond the reach of angry remonstrance, and could be effectually cured only by education.

Yet, in the midst of its triumph, the power of the hierarchy was already undermined. Its worldly pretensions, whatever their temporary use, were in obvious contradiction to the proper character of a Christian church. The struggle through which its supremacy had been attained was a disgraceful exhibition of low intrigue and passion, fatal to the respect and affection of its subjects; and the almost unlimited power consequent on success inflated insupportably its selfishness and arrogance. Hence the advance of papal influence was accompanied by ever-increasing complaints of its abuse. The grasping ambition of the pope and his legates, and the licentiousness and avarice of the inferior clergy, were a scandal and contradiction to the Christian name. The irregularities naturally accompanying the profession of celibacy were connived at, in consideration of money payments to the bishops; and the progress of indulgences, or specific privileges of exemption from the consequences of sin, threatened to make all morality a farce. The plenary indulgences liberally distributed by the popes for services to the church, and especially awarded to those new-fangled martyrs the crusaders, or even to contributors to the outfit of a crusade, produced the most deplorable consequences;[1] and it was notorious that these privileged heroes shamelessly abused their fancied immunity by committing every kind of atrocity.[2] The Jubilee, which offered a plenary indulgence to all who, at a prescribed season, visited Rome and went through certain forma-

[1] A criminal, it was said, had only to sew a cross to his dress in order to be absolved. The worst offenders were encouraged in their crime because they thought "faciam scelera, quia per susceptionem crucis innoxius ero, quinetiam multorum flagitiosorum animas liberabo." Gieseler, ii. 2, 504.

[2] A practice had early arisen of compounding for offences under church authority. If a penitent professed himself unable to fast he might pay twenty pence, or even ten pence; he might commute seven weeks of bread and water for 1200 psalms sung on his knees, or 1680 sung without kneeling. If unequal to perform these penances himself, he might purchase the services of some deserving person, a monk, for instance, to go through them on his behalf. (Gieseler, ii. 1, 336.) Hence a regular traffic in compositions for sin, of the profits of which the clergy were not slow to avail themselves. Rich donations were made to abbeys and convents, and the church throve (in appearance) upon the delinquencies of its members. P. Damiani quotes, in reference to the practice, Proverbs xiii. 8. The first Pope who granted plenary indulgences appears to have been the infamous Benedict IX. (Ibid.)

lities there, not only enriched enormously the papal treasury, but acted as a huge largess levied on European credulity by the Roman housekeepers, who made the pilgrims[1] pay exorbitantly for their piety. The discomfiture predicted by St. Bernhard of a church preferring worldly grandeur to innocence and judgment seemed imminent. Its unintelligible language and gaudy worship were rapidly losing their influence; while the school theology was discredited through its vain formalism, and its attempted defence of the most intolerable abuses.

2. *The Albigensian War and the Inquisition, &c.*

The antagonism arising from these causes first showed itself in several sects external to the church, distinguished by peculiar mysteries and austerities. In the twelfth century, a sect variously named Cathari, Publicani, Paterini, &c., connected with the ancient heresies of the Paulicians and Manichæans, had spread through many parts of Europe. To certain docetic notions about Christ, they united a vigorous protest against the hierarchy and sacraments of the church, its empty ceremonial, and particularly its worship of the cross and of relics; they disclaimed the Old Testament and its God, and were especially formidable from their familiarity with Scripture, which somehow or other, says Ekbert, seemed strangely to confirm their erroneous views. They settled principally in the comparatively civilised and flourishing districts of Upper Italy, Provence, and Languedoc, where Peter de Bruis and the monk Henry of Clugny, a man of strict morals and impressive eloquence, had obtained a favourable hearing for their denunciations of clerical formalism and depravity. The result was that crucifixes were burned, churches profaned, the adult rebaptised, and the sacramental presence of the Lord's body denied. These separatists declared all places to be alike holy in the sight of God. They ridiculed the idea of the church being a house built by human hands; inveighed against the chanting of the priests and the praying for the dead; and their success was such as almost to turn the charge of heresy against their adversaries, inducing the people to scoff at the benediction of the bishops.[2] The clergy

[1] During the jubilee proclaimed by Clement VI. no less than twelve hundred thousand pilgrims thronged the holy city from every part of Christendom.

[2] Gieseler, ii. 2, 538, 553.

were afraid to show themselves in public, and Troubadours and Minnesingers sang lampoons against Rome through the streets. About the same time (A.D. 1170) the pious but illiterate Lyonese trader, Peter Waldo, was induced, by reading the New Testament, of which he had procured a translation, to give away his possessions to the poor, and without ecclesiastical ordination to preach a revival of primitive Christianity on the basis of voluntary poverty and self-denial. Anathematised by the Pope he was forced into separatism, and his followers, who at first objected only to the tyrannical authority of the church, soon began to make a general protest against its corruptions. Many other instances of resistance to papal authority occurred in various parts of Europe, and Germany in particular cherished a vindictive reminiscence of the ill-treatment of the great Hohenstaufen, Frederic II., of whom a prediction was circulated that he would speedily return alive to take vengeance on the unscrupulous priesthood who persecuted him. The reading of Scripture became popular notwithstanding the opposition of the clergy, who found their personal influence diminished, and vainly urged that the sacred volume was far too profound to be safely intrusted to the unlearned.[1] Of course the church made desperate efforts to recover by violence or craft the influence it had lost. Anathematising the refractory, it ordered princes, under pain of excommunication, to arm against them, and, under the sign of the cross, to confiscate their goods and enslave their persons. It was useless to preach to men who immediately taunted the preacher with the vices of his order, requesting him either to amend his life or to resign his office; and it was soon found that a secession arising out of the outraged moral sense was far more difficult to deal with than disputes about subtleties of dogma. Violent measures seemed only to provoke a more determined spirit of opposition. Again the ecclesiastical party took counsel, and, discarding the gold and pomp of the church, they now went about barefoot in the guise of the early Apostles, preaching more vigorously than before. This failing, severe measures were resumed; and the issue was that fearful act of papal vengeance, the crusade against the "Albigenses," whose savage leader Arnold, in his report to the Holy Father, boasted of having spared neither age nor sex, urging his followers to the indiscriminate slaughter

[1] Gieseler, ii. 2, 573.

of heretic and Catholic with the words, "Kill, for the Lord will know his own."

Finding conciliatory measures unavailing to quell the spirit of conscientious resistance, the popes had recourse to every device both of severity and craft. Innocent III., appealing to the authority of St. Paul,[1] scrupled not to employ fraud in order to quell those who presumed to cause division in the church. "We will not," he says, in his instructions to the legates, "begin with this Count of Toulouse, who offers to expostulate and treat; but, beguiling him for the present with prudent dissimulation, we must first destroy the other satellites of Antichrist, and shall afterwards find it easier to deal with him singly." The Count went to Rome, where he met with a friendly reception and ingenuous acknowledgment of his rights; but found on his return that he had been deluded, and that the conditions seriously demanded of him were, to wear no covering but a brown cloak, to live in the open fields, to go to Jericho, to yield everything to his enemies, and generally to concede all the requisitions of the clergy. The crusade was renewed, incendiaries and criminals of every kind being hastily absolved and enlisted for special service against heresy; and the cruel measures resorted to on this occasion were declared by the Council of Lateran (A.D. 1215) to be the general law and duty of Catholicism. The Inquisition was another contemporary institution, in which Christianity indirectly emulated the compulsory proselytism of Mahomet. By a decree of the same council the bishops were specially ordered to make a circuit twice, or at least once, a year, in their several dioceses for the purpose of inquiring into heresy; and the jurisdiction was afterwards transferred to the more efficient agency of the Dominicans. The names of witnesses were to be concealed, the evidence of criminals admitted, the torture employed, and resolute denial considered as conclusive proof of guilt. The inquisitor tried to mystify the accused by captious questions. He asked the presumed delinquent whether the new-born infant came from man or God. If the reply was, "From man:" "Then," said the inquisitor, "you are a heretic; for only heretics deny the creation of man by God." And if the accused happened to reply, "From God," he was equally convicted of heresy, as making God the paramour of a woman. They asked, too, whether the soul began with the embryo, or after it? Whether

[1] 2 Cor. xii. 16.

all souls were made at one and the same moment, and where? Whether the host consecrated by the priest was the whole Deity, or only part of Him? If he answered, "The whole Deity," the examiner exclaimed, "Suppose then that four priests consecrate the host at one time in the same church, how can the whole Deity be contained in each consecration?" And if the trembling respondent admitted, in his confusion, that such was the necessary inference, the inquisitor triumphantly convicted him of asserting the existence of four Gods at once. A Franciscan monk ventured to declare openly[1] in Toulouse, that Peter and Paul themselves would have been unable to prove their orthodoxy before the Inquisition, and was condemned to imprisonment for life for uttering this unpalatable truth.

3. *Progress of Schism.*

Yet rigorous measures, instead of extinguishing heresy, seemed only to stimulate its growth. The Cathari and Waldenses maintained themselves not only in France, but in Italy, Germany, Spain, and Piedmont. Sects who at first varied but little from Catholicism were confirmed in their incipient antipathy by persecution, and began to denounce Rome as the "beast" and "whore" of the Apocalypse.[2] They said that the venom of worldliness had corrupted the Roman church from the time of Pope Sylvester; that they themselves, as followers of Christ and the Apostles, and suffering persecution for righteousness sake, were the true church, in which all men stood on the same footing, and were equally entitled to the priesthood; that a bad priest could not effectually administer the sacraments, or confer absolution; that the clergy ought not to be idle, to accumulate wealth, or to practise celibacy; that the mass was no apostolic observance; that no human ordinances could be essential to salvation; that Latin prayers were profitless to the laity; and that scriptural obligations alone were binding upon Christians. Milan was the great heretical metropolis, and it is related that the city authorities (A.D. 1240) burned a large proportion of the inhabitants in order to clear themselves from the imputation of complicity. Yet many princes, fearless of papal vengeance, took dissent

[1] In 1319. [2] Ch. xiii. 17.

under their protection; and Hubert, Marquis Pallavicini, is said to have publicly declared his utter indifference to the controversy, and that heretic and Catholic were alike contemptible. Great multitudes were secretly instructed in the Scriptures, of which there was a German translation; and the dissenters began to fortify their position by secret organisation, and by retorting the prevaricating arts of their tormentors. They appointed a bishop and a pope with the names of the corresponding Catholic dignitaries; so as, when interrogated, to be able to say they professed the faith of Theodoric and of Gregory. They selected certain old women of their number, to whom they gave the fictitious names of "Mary," "Matrimony," "Communion," and "Church;" so that, when examined, they could conscientiously declare that they believed all that was admitted by "Holy Mary," or upheld by "Mother Church." A priest named Ivo, wrongfully accused of heresy, saved himself by flight, and was enabled to pass through many provinces of Italy in correspondence with the "Paterini," for whose cause he hypocritically pretended to be suffering, and who, believing his professions, imprudently admitted him into their confidence. He afterwards declared that, "deceiving the deceivers, but, God knows, continuing in heart and soul a true Christian," he had, by taking advantage of the heretical countersign, been sumptuously entertained from city to city, outwardly conforming to all the usages of vicious indulgence prevalent in the society; and that he had discovered how missionaries were sent about to suborn the powerful and rich, and how novices were systematically transmitted to the University of Paris for instruction in logic and theology, in order to prepare them for maintaining polemical controversy with success. Many of these sects emphatically distinguished the ancient Jewish God, considered to have been the creator of the transitory, from the Christian or true God, the father of Jesus Christ, and Author of the permanent and eternal; attributing to the former, whom they identified with the "Prince of the world,"[1] the inspiration of the Old Testament, with the exception of Psalms, Prophets, and the Books of Solomon. Some reprobated the whole of the Old Testament as the work of the devil, excepting only the passages quoted in the New. Moses was universally decried, and great doubts were entertained as to the divine mission of particular patriarchs

[1] John xiv. 30.

and prophets, some limiting their approval to John the Baptist alone. Assuredly there was great want of reform, but the reformers were variously minded, and did not always act up to their own principles. The Cathari, *i.e.* the pure or "perfect" men, were ascetically strict in denouncing all commerce of the sexes, including matrimony as well as adultery or incest in the catalogue of mortal sins; they carried puritanical aversion to such an excess as even to proscribe eggs and meat as impure, and to forbid the eating of them as an indirect encouragement to objectionable indulgence, which was not to be tolerated unless in case of urgent need. But their novices gave themselves the more latitude in anticipation of the "consolation," or free pardon, which was to follow upon their completed vows; a consummation which they postponed as long as possible until the capacity of enjoyment had ceased, or sometimes hastily accepted in the predetermination to shorten "endurance" by suicide.[1] A mystical sect spread extensively through the Rhine districts, called "Brethren of the Free Spirit,"[2] seemed to have derived their very vague notions from the pantheistic theology formerly cultivated in the University of Paris, and which had thrown its presumed author, Aristotle, into temporary discredit. Everything, they said, is one, since God is all things; the soul of the first man was part of the divine substance; and the soul of every man, who refrains from sin, is a portion of the Holy Ghost. They held that the Old Testament dispensation was done away by the New, and that a new spiritual æra had commenced, in which external or sacramental salvation was superseded; but they exaggerated the virtue of charity and the goodness of God so as to make the latter a cloak for ill-doing, and the former literally to cover a multitude of sins. Their leading tenet appears to have been man's unity with God and his spiritual freedom; ideas which, although certainly scriptural,[3] were easily misconstrued, producing either ascetic self-denial or defiant self-indulgence. It was alleged that the Christian, whose will had been reconciled

[1] This was called the Endura, from the Provençal word "endurar," to go without, meaning to go without food. Many postponed accepting the "consolamenti" until death, making sure, however, of salvation by entering into a compact, ("la convenenza,") with some member of the society, by virtue of which a prospective membership was assumed in order to be prepared against sudden death.

[2] Often confounded with the less speculative Waldenses, and perhaps not always distinguishable from them.

[3] John iv. 23; vi. 63; Rom. viii.

to God, might freely indulge his natural propensities without sin; and a female votary, Mary of Valenciennes, wrote a book ingeniously proving that all obligations are comprehended in the one precept, "love only, and do what thou wilt." Many of these early sects exemplified the risk of attempting a desirable object without an adequate comprehension of it, and of dwelling too fondly on a one-sided idea. The Adamites, for instance, aimed at a restoration of paradisiacal innocence, by abjuring conventional usages and restraints, assembling by night in a state of nudity, and substituting promiscuous concubinage for marriage.

There were many other sects, like that of the "Apostolic Brethren" of Northern Italy, under Segarelli and Fra Dolcino, whose tumultuary opposition to the church was speedily extinguished; but enemies were continually arising within the church itself, which often found it difficult to maintain its prerogative against the equal claims and considerably better reasoning of its disobedient children. Among these were the insurrectionary Franciscans, whose case was so far singular that they continued in association with their order, although forced by persecution into hostility to the Papacy.

4. *The Begging Friars.*

The monastic orders had promoted, in more ways than one, the cause of papal aggrandisement. The influence acquired by their real or pretended austerity made it an object for the popes to patronise and conciliate them. In the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries it had become common to grant exemptions from episcopal authority to religious houses and orders, by which the popes gained a large accession of power, while the local consequence of the bishops was lowered. Among the ramifications of disciplined ascetics, all of whom were champions of the hierarchy, military ardour found its appropriate place, and a hybrid combination of the ecclesiastic with the soldier added the obligation of doing battle with infidels to the ordinary monkish vows. But the regular clergy passed through the same series of evolutions as the secular; from popularity to wealth, from wealth to corruption and contempt. The history of monasticism is a perpetual oscillation between religious revival and degeneracy; between the

creation of new orders and the decay consequent on their prosperity. The pontifical character was ill suited to monkish imitators of the Apostles; and the mitre, sandals, and other insignia of hierarchical rank, implied a disclaimer of the very objects for which monasteries had been instituted. The extraordinary success of the Cistercians under Bernhard of Clairvaulx was a consequence of the revived strictness of Benedictine rule, the dismissal of parade, and subjection to the visitorial authority of the bishop; but the Cistercians soon afterwards became as degenerate as the rest, "caring more to extend their earthly possessions than to have their conversation in heaven."[1] Amidst these inconsistencies and revolutions, many were led to ask, whence all these varieties of dress, profession, and performance? and how can a religion thus shifting its ground from day to day—on one occasion declaring indispensable for the kingdom of heaven what at another it disclaims—be considered a reliable anchorage for the soul? A decree of the great Council of Lateran, in 1215, forbade the arbitrary formation of what it terms "new religions;" yet, immediately afterwards, the popes found it expedient themselves to sanction the establishment of a new religious order, the old no longer answering the original purpose. The example of the Waldenses, realising the ideal of monkish profession more truly and completely than the monks themselves, had made a profound impression; and it was necessary to turn, if possible, in favour of the hierarchy the prepossession which began to act against it. Under these circumstances, the half-insane zeal of Francis of Assisi, who, in order literally to fulfil the evangelical precepts, threw away his shoes and coat, was hailed with acclamation by clergy as well as people. He was said to have come, as the light of the latter days, in the spirit and power of Elias; to be the "angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God;" he was marked with the sacred "stigmata" in his hands and feet, which James de Voragine philosophically explained as a result of the deep internal emotions of his soul.[2] The bells rang on his arrival, the boys shouted and sang; heresy was confounded, and the faith of the church confirmed. The vow of the original Franciscans, or "Minor Brothers," included chastity, obedience

[1] Gieseler, ii. 2, 317.

[2] In explanation the author quotes instances of several women whose children bore the impress of their thoughts when pregnant, and also of a hen mentioned by Aristotle, who was so elated by a successful battle with a cock, that a comb and spurs began to grow forthwith. Gieseler, ii. 2, 349.

to the See of Rome, and renunciation of every kind of property; they were to have neither home, nor money, nor effects, but to live on charity as strangers and pilgrims, willingly sharing the poverty of their Divine Master. The order founded by Dominic Guzman at Toulouse, for the purpose of converting heretics and ministering to the health of souls, was bound by the same pledge; the saint, on his deathbed, adjuring his followers with dire imprecations to eschew all possessions and superfluities. But the obligation of poverty was forgotten amidst the sudden and enormous popularity attained by these orders, followed, of course, by proportionate patronage and privileges from the popes. According to Matthew Paris, their houses had, in twenty-four years, grown to the dimensions of palaces; despite their vows, they had accumulated enormous wealth; and the chronicler proceeds to describe how they extorted confessions, and plied the trade of fortune-hunters at the bedside of the dying rich. They actively studied the school theology, and filled the professorial chairs of Paris and Oxford. Their itinerant confessors usurped the offices of the ordinary clergy, who complained of being entirely supplanted in public estimation, and more particularly so in the testamentary dispositions of the wealthy.[1] Vain were the remonstrances of the university and bishops, although a learned doctor of the Sorbonne proved convincingly that these meddling monks were the false prophets of Matthew,[2] and the "creepers into houses," alluded to in the Epistle.[3] He urged that these sturdy beggars ought to be reminded of the apostolic words, declaring that those who refused to work ought not to be suffered to eat;[4] and that the proud frequenters of the palaces of princes should recollect that when Peter entered the court of the Roman governor he thrice denied his Master.

Amid the general laxity of the Franciscans, there had always been a stricter party religiously adhering to the founder's rule; and when the popes, favouring the dominant party, openly encouraged abuses which changed the character of the society, the rigorists, called "spirituales" or "fraticelli," gave unreserved expression to the democratic feeling of revolt against prerogative which had been a real, though unavowed element in the original conception of the order. These zealots, goaded by persecution, denounced the pope as Anti-

[1] Gieseler, ii. 2, 334. [2] Ch. xxiv. 11. [3] 2 Tim. iii. 2–6.
[4] 1 Thess. iv. 11; 2 Thess. iii. 10.

christ; they declared the Roman church to be the Apocalyptic whore, with whom the princes of the earth committed fornication. The whole armoury of prophetical denunciation was applied to contemporary evils as the predicated woes of the "latter days," while a new æra of peace and righteousness was proclaimed by the mendicants as commencing with themselves. Commentaries were written on the Apocalypse magnifying the importance of St. Francis, and turning the beasts and vials into weapons against the Papacy. The numerous devotional communities of men and women, commonly called Beghines, Beghards, or Lollards, which arose in the Netherlands in the eleventh century, were afterwards very generally affiliated to the mendicant orders, and the denomination became, not altogether without reason, a bye-word for itinerant heresy.

5. *Rise of Nationalities.*

The church was its own greatest enemy; but among the external causes of its decline the most important was, the increase of national feeling consequent on the union of fiefs into large and powerful kingdoms. Superstition ceased to have a monopoly of the mind, and ecclesiastical centralisation gave place to a healthier spirit of political development. In early times the church had been the only public institution having a constituted form and capacity for action. The other elements of civilisation were absent or immature. The temporal power being indefinitely divided was proportionably feeble; and the ability to govern extensively was in the age subsequent to Charlemagne to be found only in the church. But from the cessation of the crusading mania the energies which had been so far enlisted under the Papacy took a new direction. In the course of those expeditions the mind dropped a portion of its prejudices, and, cured of its wild avidity for adventure, turned more exclusively to home affairs. Country, liberty, and property began to share the attention which had been consecrated to religion; and Innocent III. put a right estimate on the dangerous rivalry implied in these growing considerations when he so bitterly inveighed against Magna Charta. Papal encroachments upon weak monarchs were often checked by the opposition of the feudal nobility, who, however disposed to reverence the church, were by no means prepared to submit unconditionally to its

claims. Many of the crusaders had witnessed in Rome itself the corruptions of the papal court, and their respect for it was sensibly diminished by a nearer acquaintance. But it was not necessary to go to Rome in order to become familiar with ecclesiastical ambition and rapacity. Frederick Barbarossa declared the papal emissaries to be more poachers than preachers; not so much peacemakers as money-makers; not healers of human sorrow, but hunters after gold.[1] The kings of France and England often attempted to curb their insolence, and to reduce Roman interference generally to definite limits. The Constitutions of Clarendon were no more than an assertion of reason and ancient right against the intolerable usurpations of the ecclesiastical authorities, who, in favour of their order, allowed murders innumerable to go unpunished because perpetrated by clergymen.[2] The nobles of Frederick Barbarossa promptly resented the insolent pretensions of Adrian IV. to confer the imperial power,[3] and the papal victory over the house of Hohenstaufen was dearly purchased by the enduring alienation of Germany. The Spanish Cortes protested against ecclesiastical encroachment, and the French nobility under Louis IX. formed a league for the same purpose. This politic though pious monarch, the reputed author of the first "pragmatic sanction," or declaration of French ecclesiastical independence, wisely refused to enforce spiritual censures by civil penalties when requested so to do by the assembled prelates of his realm. He readily agreed to punish any one who could be legally proved to have done wrong; but declined being made the blind instrument of clerical vengeance, instancing a Count of Bretagne, who, after being accused and excommunicated by the clergy, had been eventually exculpated by admission of the pope himself. Even the clergy became disaffected to the sovereign pontiffs, and, mercilessly pillaged as they were for foreign purposes, began to look on papal theocracy as an odious oppression. A Carthusian monk taken into custody at Cambridge, declared before the legate that the devil had broken loose; that the pretended pope was an infamous heretic, a simonist and usurer, who polluted the sanctity of the world as well as of the church.[4] Individual bishops sometimes ventured to defy the authority of Rome, and M. Paris mentions an Archbishop of York of the thirteenth century, who had the

[1] Gieseler, ii. 2, 256. [2] Ibid. ii. 2, 89. [3] Ibid. p. 61.
[4] Ibid. ii. 2, 648.

honour of being excommunicated on account of the integrity of his dealings, and who, the more he was cursed at Rome, was proportionately admired and blessed by his own people. In reply to a letter addressed by Innocent IV. to Robert Grosthead, bishop of Lincoln, requiring him to appoint a mere boy to a vacant canonry, the English prelate flatly refused compliance, declaring that such demands, whencesoever emanating, ought to be pertinaciously resisted, and that nothing since the sin of Lucifer could be more abominable than, for a merely selfish end, deliberately to defraud the Lord's flock of the services of an efficient pastor. In fact, the church, happily for Europe, had only partially succeeded in obtaining that absolute dominion over the mind which was the goal of its policy. Discredited at first by its own extortions and vices, it was left behind long before these could be removed by the progress of society. When the crusades, the increase of commercial wealth, and improvements in the art of war, had combined with their own extravagances and feuds to lower the relative influence of the nobles, a coalition of prince and people substituted nationality for feudalism, producing civil confederacies sufficiently powerful to be the permanent schools in which the European mind was to become inured to the notions of property and government. The edifice of individual and social liberty which Machiavelli looked for in vain amidst the dissensions of the petty Italian States, was commenced by despotic power upon broad foundations of national union. Italy certainly possessed one element of nationality in its literature, which instinctively recognised its natural foe[1] in that degenerate institution which had ceased to be of any real utility either for religious or for civil purposes; which affected to govern minds whose moral allegiance it had forfeited, and which was the great obstacle to that political union which it was itself incompetent to enforce. The vernacular languages which had been scouted by the popes as barbarous, were afterwards purposely discountenanced by them in order to check the progress of national feeling. For the same reason they discouraged the revival of national customary law.[2] On the other hand, the nationalities endeavoured to put a stop to the wholesale plunder and anarchical immunities of the clergy. They refused to allow swarms of foreign priests to enjoy half the produce of

[1] Comp. Dante, Inferno, xix. ver. 90 and 112. Paradiso, ix. 183; xviii. 118; xxvii.

[2] Gregory XI. anathematised in 1374 Eccard's Manual called "The Sachsenspiegel."

the land without paying taxes. They insisted on maintaining the royal supremacy, and made the bishops, as peers of parliament, a part of the political machinery of the realm. From the time of Edward I. resistance to Rome became the normal policy of England. The clergy had to submit to taxation like other subjects; their hankering for Rome was checked by the statutes of Præmunire and their avarice controlled by the law of Mortmain. It is true that the very monarchs who most loudly denounced the encroachments of Rome were not always consistent, and that for some momentary interest they occasionally deferred to the authority they would have disclaimed. But a great change had been already effected when Boniface VIII. assumed the lofty airs of Hildebrand and Innocent in his quarrels with Philip the Fair. Philip was the first king of France who summoned the "third estate" to take part in the deliberations of the states general; and, secure of the support of the great body of his subjects, publicly burned the rescript in which papal supremacy, temporal as well as spiritual, was offensively asserted. The Pope urged with truth that it were inconsistent and "Manichæan" to recognise two heads, two swords, or two sovereign powers; one should, of course, be subservient to the other; but the time had evidently passed for claiming the superior authority as his own upon the plea of church unity and church "liberty."

6. *Beginnings of Reform.*

The power of the popes declined rapidly during the fourteenth century. Their seventy years' residence at Avignon placed them in a dependency on France ludicrously contrasting with their extravagant claims; and their attempts to balance the disadvantage by straining their authority elsewhere met with hostility or indifference. Christendom had partially awakened from its infatuation, yet the Papacy continued its career of corruption more shamelessly than before. While the Italian domains of the church were the spoil of depredators, and Rome under Rienzi was again mimicking the old Republic, its absentee bishop with his dissolute retinue of non-resident prelates kept a court[1] of unexampled licentiousness supported

[1] Petrarch, who was long at the court of Avignon, in his confidential letters gives

of course by redoubled exactions, many of which pressed with peculiar severity upon the clergy. The latter were thus provoked into antagonism, while a desire for reform, encouraged by the rigid Franciscans, became general among the laity. Meantime, the great contest with the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, upon whom the anathemas of John XXII. fell comparatively harmless, offered a secure asylum to all the enemies of the Papacy. The cause of Louis was the more warmly espoused by Germany on account of the evident conspiracy on the papal side to subserve the interests of France; the jurists of Bologna and Paris pronounced in his favour, and pious enthusiasts of the female sex saw visions of Christ undertaking to support him. The idea of appealing to a superior authority within the church, first started by the powerful monarchs assailed by the popes, began to be elaborately discussed by the Ghibelline writers, Marsilius of Padua and others, who freely canvassed the whole hierarchical theory. A book, called "Defensor Pacis," declared that Holy Scripture, as interpreted by the common voice of Christendom, was the sole standard of faith; that no mortal was privileged to dispense with its precepts; that doubtful points could be decided only by general councils; that the sole authority competent to convene such councils was that of sovereign princes, without whose sanction no excommunications were valid; and that all bishops were equal in power.[1] Some of these assertions went beyond what the public were as yet prepared to admit, and the Emperor's cause was perhaps more effectually served by some of the monstrous propositions simultaneously contended for on the papal

a repulsive account of its unblushing licentiousness, comparing it to Babylon and the interior of the Cretan labyrinth.

[1] Evidence from history was adduced to show that "bishop" and "presbyter" were originally no more than appellations for one and the same office, which was a merely human arrangement for the due order of the church; that neither Peter nor any of the Apostles exercised control over the others; and indeed, that the bishop of Rome was successor of Paul rather than of Peter, it being more than doubtful that the latter had ever been there; it was, moreover, proved that the Roman church had obtained, by slow degrees, a conventional primacy, through the practice of referring disputed cases of doctrine or discipline to its decision; but that no Roman bishop exercised coercive authority over other bishops till the time of Constantine, when the charitable assistance which had been rendered in several cases began to be insisted on as a peremptory right; that the desire of succeeding emperors to obtain more favour and respect in the eyes of their subjects induced them to court the public sanction of the Roman pontiff; but that this no more proved the paramount authority of the latter than the crowning of the monarchs of France the superior dignity of the archbishops of Rheims.

side.[1] But a decisive advantage was gained by the declaration of the German Princes at the Diet of Frankfort (A.D. 1338), disclaiming the papal right of interference in imperial elections. In this, the German Magna Charta, it was asserted that the imperial dignity depended on God and the electors alone; that, in case of vacancy, the count palatine, not the pope, was to act as imperial vicar; that no bulls were to be published without the emperor's permission; and all the papal condemnatory proceedings were cancelled. England, too, confirmed in its opposition to the pope by its hostility to France, refused under Edward III. to pay the papal tribute ignominiously conceded by his predecessor John without parliamentary sanction; and disclaimed the heavy impositions of tithes, "first-fruits," "reservations," "provisions," and consecration fees, which disgusted the clergy themselves, and converted their prayers and sermons into a dismal howl of lamentation and malediction.[2] His spiritual weapons blunted by his execrable behaviour,[3] the vicar of Christ was reduced to the extreme ignominy of assuming a bland and submissive demeanour to the vilest desperados and murderers.[4] And when Rome, feeling the loss of profit and consequence arising from the absence of its sovereigns, prevailed on them to return, the issue was most unfortunate; for the first Italian prelate made himself so unpopular, that the Tramontane Cardinals procured the election of an anti-pope, who immediately went back to Avignon; and, for upwards of thirty years, Christendom had to endure

[1] Augustinus Triumphus, a monk of Ancona, published a wild vindication of papal supremacy in a book written in the scholastic style, entitled "Summa de Potestate Ecclesiastica." He asserted the popes to hold their power directly from God, and to be entitled to the same honours as Christ; to be alone authorised to judge and depose all secular magistrates; that the so-called gift of Constantine was only a restoration of what had been illegally taken from the church, &c. They who pretended that the pope, as vicar of Christ, had power over spiritual things, but not temporal, were as absurd, it was argued, as the counsellors of the King of Assyria, who said that the God of Israel was the God of the mountains, but had no jurisdiction over the plains. God is Lord of all things, temporal as well as spiritual; now God cannot deny Himself; see 2 Tim. ii. 13; but He would deny Himself if He exempted anything from his dominion; the pope is God's vicegerent; but if he were to exempt anything from his dominion, he would not be God's true vicegerent, and the consequence would be the error of the Manichæans. See Gieseler, ii. 3, pp. 46 and 104.

[2] Gieseler, ii. 3, 120.

[3] As when, in miserable vindictiveness, Pope John XXII. let loose the savage Lithuanians on the march of Brandenberg; and see the horrid imprecations of Clement VI.—Gieseler, ii. 3, pp. 51 and 77.

[4] Joanna of Naples, for instance, and Peter the Cruel of Castile.

the scandal of two popes mutually excommunicating each other. Every abuse was thus necessarily doubled, and each court having its own staff of cardinals, the death of a pope was no termination of the schism. The very vices which the church once censured in the temporal power were unblushingly practised, and even deliberately defended by itself.[1] It excommunicated in order to be paid for absolving, and made simony doubly nefarious by withholding appointments from purchasers, and by reiterated sales of the same benefices. The cry for reform became loud and general, but there was little unanimity as to the object or the means. The first attempts were directed against flagrant abuses, without any effective change of system; striving to disarm prejudice by the smallness of the deviation from established opinions and habits. Reform meant the removal of what, to the limited individual feeling, seemed noxious and unchristian. One complained of masses for the dead; another of the subjection of the bishops; another allowed devotion to the host, but not adoration; asserting that it was not God, though it contained God. The most influential party advocating reform were those who, still attached to the church though revolted by its vices, wished to make it self-correcting; to prevail on the rival popes to accommodate their difference, or to defer to the decision of a general council. And yet the slightest reflection might have shown that there must have been something radically wrong in a system which had so miserably disappointed its original promise. As soon as a church existed there was dissent; revolt was as ancient as obedience. The unity affected by Catholicism remained an unrealised idea, and, instead of peace and good-will, religion seemed to have ever found its congenial expression in excommunications and curses. But the resistance was destitute of any principle which could effectually replace that of the establishment; and men, vacillating between the sense of wrong and habitual veneration, had often unconsciously co-operated in tightening the fetter which galled them. While opposing papal usurpation, the English kings condescended to accept Ireland as their gift, and thoughtlessly applied to them for dispensation from their oaths. The persecution of the Emperor Frederic II. did not extinguish his respect for that church which he had denounced[2] as the

[1] On the plea of infallibility; see Gieseler, ii. 3, p. 149.

[2] In a letter to Henry III. of England.

"step-mother" and "insatiable leech" of Christendom, nor did it render him less implacable in persecuting heresy. Louis of Bavaria, however beloved, could not subdue his crafty rival; and the uncertain state of popular feeling obliged the persecuted emperor to vindicate his orthodoxy by a public repetition of the Creed and Lord's Prayer. At the Diet of 1338 the ordinances of the popes were carefully distinguished from the infallible doctrines of the church, and a legitimate future pope was appealed to against the unrighteous doings of the actual pretender. It seems to have been thought that, although extortion and aggression were to be resisted, the great sources of abuse were to be patiently endured; and the ignorance and prejudice which have to be consulted in every reform led to compromises and half measures facilitating relapse, through which real improvement was indefinitely postponed.

Papal ambition and delinquency were the most obvious sources of corruption. Many deprecated the office altogether; or, what amounted to the same thing, declared it to be a matter of perfect indifference whether there were two popes or twenty. The more moderate, led by D'Ailly and Gerson, objected not so much to the office as to the inordinate increase of its temporal power; they distinguished the true or universal from the visible church, and said, "Restore to Cæsar what is Cæsar's, and then God will readily have his due." They blamed the negligence or pusillanimity of the emperors in abandoning their right of arbitrating in papal quarrels; and declared that authority misused reverted to its source, which in the present case was the general Christian body. In short they wished to reform the church from within; hoping to renew its vitality by removing its worst abuses. The first object was to bring the schism to a close; and the University of Paris, which headed the movement, "the learned Daniel," it was said, "through whom alone the chaste Susannah of the church was to be rescued from its adulterous elders," proposed three modes of doing so; voluntary cession or compromise on the part of the popes, or compulsory adjustment of the dispute by a general council. It was, however, soon found vain to expect disinterested conduct from the popes. They solemnly undertook to co-operate and yield for the general good; both Gregory and Benedict swore to give their lives, if necessary, to heal the wound of the church; but they both evaded performance of the promise as soon as they were elected; so that it only

remained to try the other alternative, and to see whether the aristocracy of the church could successfully exercise the authority which had been so disreputably mismanaged by its monarch.

This was the aim of the great ecclesiastical assemblies of the fifteenth century; and it is scarcely necessary to add that they were a failure. The evils requiring removal were not accidental, but natural results of the same Catholic system on which the councils themselves were based. To end the schism the Council of Pisa elected a new pope; but the others refused to resign, and the scandal was only increased. To transfer to a council the authority of the pope was no effectual cure for evils infecting the whole hierarchy; the lapsed dignity reverted to its former holder, and the theoretical servant of all[1] became, as before, master of all. The Council of Constance persevered in the fatal error of committing the cause of reform to the superintendence of a pope, whose concessions, made under the form of special concordat with the several represented nations, were naturally as small and ineffectual as possible.[2] The renewal of abuse caused a renewal of complaint, and the Council of Basle, stimulated by the progress of the Hussites, addressed itself to the work of reformation with an energy not a little astonishing to the pope, who in full reliance on its anticipated subserviency to his views had consented to convene it.[3] Unfortunately the power to reform diminished through papal opposition in proportion to the zeal and sincerity of the attempt, schism revived in a new shape, and the salutary decrees of the council were ignored or eluded. Many of these reformatory decisions were eventually adopted by particular nations, and became the basis of the moderate or Gallican, as opposed to the absolutist or "ultramontane" Catholicism. But the principle of ecclesiastical constitutionalism was betrayed by the Governments most interested in supporting it; the papal system with all its

[1] "Caput ministeriale ecclesiæ."

[2] For instance, the pope promised to impose no arbitrary taxes, *unless for some extraordinary Christian exigency;* indeed the reformers, as Nicol. Cusanus in his "De Concordantiâ Catholicâ," had virtually released the pope from all real restraint by the vague language of the restraints demanded.

[3] The clergy were in a sore strait, between the fear of publicity, and the fear of seeming to oppose reform. Many deprecated the probable results of discussion and exposure; others declared that the loss of temporalities, and perhaps of body and soul into the bargain, would be the inevitable consequence of shunning it. See Giesceler, ii. 4, p. 58.

monstrous claims was restored, Pius II. retracted the liberality of Æneas Sylvius, and Calixtus III. delared to the emperor that observance of the concordat, solemnly guaranteed by his predecessor, depended on the charity and liberality of the Holy See. Nothing more needed reform than the intellectual and moral condition of the clergy. A contemporary writer describes them as appointed without the least regard to talent or merit, as indulging universally in concubinage and unnatural lusts, as spending their time in field sports, and carousing with topers in public-houses.[1] But how could the censures of a council be effectual whose place of meeting was notoriously thronged by mountebanks and prostitutes, and whose most liberal members, as Gerson, were so prejudiced as openly to advocate clerical concubinage upon the pretext "præstat habere incontinentes sacerdotes quam nullos"?

But while the councils were exhausting public patience by vain pretences to do that for which they were essentially unfit, another reformatory movement was in progress, whose object, more or less clearly understood, was to amend the church from without, not merely to alter its form, but to reconstruct its foundations, and to vindicate religious liberty. The popes had long been warned by their truest friends, that if they neglected the crying evils of the time the laity would take the matter into their own hands; and that, by devoting themselves exclusively to worldly ambition and secular interests, they allowed their spiritual influence to pass into other channels. Indeed, other channels were already marked out, but they were as yet too narrow to admit the general current of Christian feeling. From the eleventh century to the end of the fourteenth, numerous independent communities and sects had virtually asserted the right of the individual conscience to seek its own religious satisfaction apart from the official machinery of the church. When the brethren of the free spirit announced in plain language the universal "sonship" of mankind, or the flagellants abandoned sacramental absolution for the singular expedient which alone, they imagined, could avert divine wrath,—the church felt its existence to be in danger, and tried to extirpate

[1] Giesceler, ii. 4, p. 254. Æneas Sylvius, when already in orders, thus jocularly addresses his father in reference to an escapade of his own at Strasburg:—"Scis qualis tu gallus fueris; at nec ego castratus sum nec ex frigidorum numero. Fateor ingenuè meum erratum, quia nec sanctior sum Davide rege, nec Salomone sapientior," &c.

voluntaryism by a merciless application of the stake. It is true that these dissentient sects were for the most part composed of illiterate persons,[1] whose views were far from comprehensive or intelligent; who ventured to think only to the extent of substituting one conventional authority for another, and, in retreating from the church, fell back upon the Bible. This, however, was undoubtedly an immense stride towards freedom. Hitherto the church had carefully kept the language of Scripture, as well as its interpretation, to itself; and they who, like St. Bernard, indulged in Scripture reference, held the church interpretations to be the spirit as opposed to the letter, and as alone infallible and decisive. The laity were limited to the use of breviary, litany, and psalter; even these could only be obtained in Latin. The frantic aversion to lay familiarity with Scripture was the result of a very natural apprehension lest laymen should become better theologians than the priests;[2] lest an inanimate formalism should be felt intolerable by persons accustomed to Biblical reading. But if a general acquaintance with the Bible was dangerous to the hierarchy, it must also be admitted that it involved no inconsiderable trial to the discretion of illiterate readers. The appeal to so difficult a volume by unskilled persons was little likely to lead to clearness of comprehension. It had been usual, even among Catholic divines, to treat the sacred page as teeming with divine "sacraments" and mysteries; so that the literal sense was nothing compared with the latent multiplicity of meanings supposed to have been in view of the Holy Spirit.[3] The study of Scripture, therefore, encouraged mysticism; and among the unlearned often led, as already described, to absurd and even immoral inferences. But the mind, in its relation to religion, has only the alternative of independence or submission; of thinking, rightly or wrongly, for itself, or slavishly adopting the thoughts of others. It was a curious characteristic of the theological mind of the age, that the men who most clearly exposed the inconclusiveness of the scholastic attempt to prove the truth of

[1] "Viri rusticani et plerique mechanici, litterarum omnino inexperti ac penitus idiotæ." In the summer of 1374 there appeared in the Rhine districts troops of half-naked persons, shrieking and dancing publicly in the name of religion, as if demoniacally possessed. Many believed them to be really so, ascribing this melancholy fact to the defective baptism conferred by an unworthy priesthood.—Gieseler, ii. 3, 281, 311.

[2] Or, as Innocent III. quaintly expressed it, "lest the ass should begin to bray reproof against the prophet." Schroeckh, vol. xxviii. p. 10.

[3] Gieseler, ii. 2, 430, n. 19, and iii. 270, n. 14.

dogma became its most resolute defenders; and that, although faith was in reality discredited by the excessive subserviency of the nominalists and their reckless advocacy of absurd propositions, its authoritative omnipotence had seemed to increase from the very failure of the effort to give it a rational basis. On the other hand, the ratiocinative scholasticism having failed, there remained (apart from authority) only the alternative of scepticism or mysticism; to abandon faith altogether, or to scan mysteries insoluble in the way of argument by means of imagination and feeling.[1] As long as the schoolmen pursued their calling with hopeful enthusiasm, mysticism and ratiocination were blended; the distinction of "devout" and "indevout" schoolmen (*scholastici indevoti*) indicating only the varying proportion in which fancy or feeling mingled in their lucubrations to fill up blanks in reasoning. The defeat of argumentative theology turned independent thought almost exclusively into the way of mysticism. Gerson and Clemangis ridiculed the laborious trifling of the schoolmen, and deplored the neglect of Biblical study:[2] They deprecated the sophistry usurping the name of theology, which, though it might sharpen the understanding, was powerless over the feelings.[3] In short, the tendency was to go back from objectivity to subjectivity; to escape the half scepticism of the disputatious nominalists by reverting to the primitive feeling and records of Christianity. The sententious pietism of the "Imitation of Christ" may be quoted as the simplest expression of this reaction. The mind, suddenly roused out of the lethargy of formalism, here appears at the lowest point of superstitious depression; learning, philosophy, the world generally, have lost their relish; and a sickly sentiment and unreasoning faith are treated as the sure passports to

[1] The mystics, it is true, give another name to the peculiar mental faculty on which they rely, and which they call "lumen intelligentiæ," "vis intelligentiæ simplicis," "umbra intellectus angelici," "scintilla vel apex rationis," &c.;—as to the correctness of such designations every one must judge from his own experience.

[2] Gieseler, ii. 3, 239.

[3] Gieseler, ii. 3, p. 243. These Catholic writers assign unlimited authority to the interpretations of the Catholic Church, justifying all the novel superstitions of Catholicism by the assumption of certain "virtues" or revelations enabling Catholics to discover in Scripture what is invisible to every one else; for instance, the impeccability of the Virgin Mary; but still it was a great step when D'Ailly declared that, according to Augustine and, indeed, apostolical authority, Christ, not Peter, was the true rock of the church; that Peter's unsteadiness and prevarication made him but a bad substitute for his master; and that "Christ" might be spiritually understood as meaning the Scriptures testifying of him.—Schroeckh, vol. xxxiii. 279.

communion with the Deity.[1] It should be observed that there was a progress in mysticism from the demonstrative to the transcendental; that whereas its earliest form, exemplified in the school of St. Victor, and afterwards revived by Gerson, was an effort to ascend upwards from below ("extensio mentis in Deum") based on a careful analysis of the powers of the soul,[2] its later manifestations were more purely and freely speculative, regarding the soul's union with God as a process accomplished within the limits of the divine essence. In these later systems God was all in all; the soul of man was a portion of God himself; the finite and infinite were indissolubly connected, and Eckart ventured to assert, that God could no more dispense with him than he with God.[3] The religious aspirations were imagined to be the symptoms and promptings of primeval love urging the spirit to its source; and the facts of the Christian revelation were as a mirror or dramatic representation of a process really occurring within the soul.[4] The deep meaning of Christianity, and of religion in general, was accurately portrayed in these mystic inferences, which, by virtue of the son's permitted immanence in man, declared the accomplished fact of man's sonship and immanence in God. In this lofty but somewhat unwholesome sphere of thought religion soared beyond the technicalities of dogma; the rigidity of creed dissolved[5] under the influence of pious fervour; the generation of the Son was the eternal operation of the emanating God, and the Holy Ghost was the divine love warming the soul of every creature. The fundamental feeling was identical with that of the free religious communities above mentioned; its leading notions were God's universality, his immanence in man, and man's right of developing his celestial affinity by free intercourse with God. It is remarkable that the speculative mystics, Eckart, Tauler, Henry Suso, &c. were public preachers; they did not

[1] The writer decries speculation and extols morality; he seems to have no idea of the intimate relation between the two; Scripture is his standard of truth; but he warns us, in reading it, not to give way to curiosity, and, premising the infallibility of "true" faith, deprecates "the attempt to understand and discuss that which should be simply passed over." Bk. i. ch. v.; bk. iv. ch. xviii., &c.

[2] Hence called by Baur the "psychological" kind.

[3] "Das Gott so selig ist und lebet ohn Verlangen
Hat er sowohl von mich als ich von ihm empfangen."

[4] "Berührt dich Gottes Geist mit seiner Wesenheit,
So wird in dir geborn das Kind der Ewigkeit."

[5] An apologist of mysticism calls it the "deliquescence" of the soul in God; "unio per amorem liquefactivum."—Gieseler, ii. 3, p. 260.

write Latin compositions or "summaries" of theology for the learned; the religion of genuine emotion could not tolerate the restraint of a foreign tongue; and they, therefore, called forth the rich resources of the German language to convey in public exhortations a draught from the living fountain which had opened to themselves. The rapid downfall of argumentative scholasticism formed a memorable contrast with the enduring vitality of mysticism, in which the eternal sentiment of religion seemed to have found a congenial organ as expansive and undying as itself. But it was not every one who could accompany the dizzy flights of German speculation. Common minds required a homelier article; a diluted mysticism, for instance, or a scholasticism of common sense; something avoiding scholastic subtleties without mounting to the grander sublimities of the mystics. This was the intellectual position of the so-called "precursors" of the Reformation. Practical opposition to the abuses of Catholicism and moral earnestness of purpose were their best characteristics; they had no philosophical principle or well-defined plan. For instance, the language of à Kempis expresses the inherited ideas of the emancipated mediæval soul before they had undergone any revision by the intellect. Wycliffe's Dialogues comprise the same subjects as the scholastic "summaries;" but he treats them in a superficial and almost childish way, bearing about the same proportion to the great schoolmen as Mrs. Trimmer to Tacitus. Everything is satisfactorily proved by begging the question;[1] and the seeming discordance between faith and reason is ascribed to the defective condition of the latter consequent on the Fall, which, however, exercises different degrees of influence on different individuals, and did not prevent certain gifted minds, as Plato's, from anticipating in a sort of profane way the doctrine of the Trinity. It was felt that subtle questions and distinctions, instead of bringing religion nearer to the mind, removed it to a distance; and men were now, as in former instances, driven back from an objective religion to one of the inner feelings and convictions. On this ground Wycliffe rebelled against the external tyranny of the church, although unprepared to part with its traditional ideas.[2] The result of his personal experience of papal intrigue

[1] On the assumption that whatever is is right; or that whatever exists exists desirably, since it can only exist in God.

[2] His occasional abrupt protests against doctrinal discussion ("Hic faciunt logici-

was expressed in his well-known denunciation of "the proud priest of Rome" as the "most cursed of clippers and purse-kervers." He defended the refusal of papal tribute, and exposed the false pretences of the begging friars. He reproved the rapacity of prelates who accepted the Levitical endowment of tithes, but claimed in addition the territorial "inheritance" in lieu of which the Levitical endowment was given; and announced to the civil authority not only its competency to take away the temporalities of an habitually-sinning church, but its duty so to do under pain of damnation, in order to make the only possible reparation for the original offence by which it led astray the ministers of God. The great schism furnished him with fresh arguments; and from attacking the oppressive discipline of the church, he was led to criticise some of its doctrines. He quoted Augustin to prove the Bible, which he translated into English for popular use, to be the sole criterium of infallible truth, containing every essential element of faith; and declared that a hundred popes and the whole body of friars turned into cardinals, should not command his assent to anything extrinsic to it. He therefore abjured transubstantiation, masses, extreme unction, indulgences, pilgrimages, &c., for which no sufficient Scripture warrant could be found; and to sacramental or external salvation of the church opposed the faith and predestination theory already maintained without contradiction by his predecessor Bradwardine. True faith and true repentance could be felt only by the "prædestinati" (*i. e.* the good), not by the "præsciti" (the wicked); hence human excommunications and absolutions were superfluous, and, indeed, impossible. Wycliffe fought vigorously for the rights of conscience and religious independence. He treated high ecclesiastical office as unscriptural; and instanced Christ's riding on an ass as rebuking the pomp and purple of cardinals and popes. But his doctrinal innovations transcended the comprehension of his day; and his ideal of apostolic poverty went beyond not only the prevalent notions of reform, but even his own practice.

The followers of Wycliffe were sacrificed to political exigencies; but his writings bore fruit in Germany, and stimulated, if

distinctionem inutilem"—"Totam illam materiam et profundationem relinquo logicis," &c.) show the natural bias of his mind; while his attempts to explain the faith betray the still overpowering sway of education and habit.

they did not originate, the preaching of Huss. Huss declaimed freely against Catholic abuses, without any suspicion arising in his own mind or that of others that he was on that account a worse Catholic. He advocated the reforms contended for by the councils; but to these he added several of the doctrines of Wycliffe, such as the general equality of bishops, the disqualification of sinful priests to administer the sacraments, the eleemosynary character of tithes, the impropriety of endowments, the right of secular control over ecclesiastical property, and the true nature and meaning of a church. In consequence of the stir caused by the dissemination of these opinions, he was summoned to answer for them before the reforming Council of Constance. He readily obeyed, imprudently relying on the presumed liberality and integrity of his judges, and on the scriptural exactness of his teaching, which had in fact been attested by the Archbishop of Prague; moreover, an imperial pass guaranteed his personal safety. But the anxiety of the council to remodel in its own favour the government of the church made it the more anxious to vindicate its orthodoxy in respect of doctrine; and it resented the intrusion of the individual reformer, whose uncompromising zeal shamed the irresolute proceedings of the ecclesiastical body. To many of its German members Huss was personally obnoxious, as head of the Bohemian or national party in the University of Prague; but his unpardonable offence was his assertion of the right of free thought, and his obtrusion of individual opinion on the church. Many and melancholy were the jokes uttered upon the etymology of his name,[1] and that of his friend Jerome of Prague.[2] He was arrested immediately on arrival, and his trial was only an affected pretence to give colour to the hostile determination which had been taken from the first. He was accused of denying the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist which in fact he had maintained; and his appeals to Scripture and to Christ were drowned in the laughter of the assembly. In prison he was perpetually persecuted with new accusations and interrogatories; and protested in vain against inferences illogically as well as maliciously drawn from his answers. His execution was the signal of the clashing of the two great principles of reform, the Catholic and the Protestant, the con-

[1] *I.e.* the goose.

[2] Faulfisch, *i.e.* putrid fish.

servative and the real or revolutionary.[1] It was the immediate result of the inflexibility of the victim in refusing to confess what he had not committed, and to retract what he sincerely believed; and the barefaced violation of the safe conduct by the council was defended on the iniquitous plea that no faith was to be kept with heretics; that no tie, divine or human, was binding, if its operation would be prejudicial to the Catholic faith.[2]

[1] Protestant writers of course claim the conservative side as their own, casting, not altogether unjustly, the odium of a revolutionary tendency upon the abuses of Catholicism.

[2] "Nec aliqua fides aut promissio de jure naturali, divino, vel humano, fuerit in præjudicium Catholicæ fidei observanda." All Christians were, moreover, commanded to abstain from derogatory remarks as to the imperial "justice," on pain of the severest penalties of treason and heresy.

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